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Grassroots Editor

January, 1960

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The Village Bell

By Henry Beetle Hough

What Is A Grassroots Editor? Houstoun Waring

The Crusader's Dilemma Mabel Norris Reese

Walt Whitman As A Country Editor C. H. MacLachlan

Is The Weekly Press Too Conservative?
Yes! John C. Obert No! Weimar Jones

Influence Of The Canadian Weeklies Kenneth F. Pettis

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Report From England Mrs. Gordon Clemetson

Grassroots Editor

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A Challenge To Editors

The International Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors, hitherto a small, closed group limited to participants in one or more of the annual workshops in Carbondale, Illinois, is opening its rolls to qualified editors throughout the world who will be invited to accept associate memberships as the first step toward full identification with the group.

Seeking only men and women of established reputation as editorial writers for weekly and semi-weekly newspapers, the executive committee is mailing out invitations to approximately 250 journalists in the United States and 15 foreign countries. The eventual goal is an organization of one thousand of the world's leading weekly newspaper editors participating in an active exchange of ideas and viewpoints that will lead to greater international understanding.

In an appeal to weekly newspaper editors to become concerned with "more than the current events in their own baliwicks," Editor Joseph C. Jahn, of the Sayville (N. Y.) **Suffolk County News** declared:

"The key challenge to the men and women responsible for the editorial 'we' anywhere in the world whether it be on Main Street, U.S.A., or an English market town, is how to persuade their readers that what happens in Little Rock, Arkansas, is of prime interest to the reader in Pakistan, and that the state of affairs in Bolivia holds significance for the reader in Devils Lake, North Dakota.

"How to avoid a nuclear holocaust that would wipe out ideological differences in one terrible, blinding flash is as much the responsibility of the editor in suburbia as it is to the men who confer daily in the editorial offices of the **New York Times.**

"This is the one great issue of our times which many small town editors feel they are the least equipped to face. The average country editor is frank to admit that while he may have influence in a local school board election his knowledge of the real significance behind the summit conference is limited by what he reads in the daily press or in the news magazines, or what he hears and sees on radio and television.

"Those of us who have been fortunate enough to attend one or more sessions of the National Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors at Southern Illinois University have received a wealth of background information on national and international developments, including the horrors of thermonuclear warfare, and we have returned to our desks determined to read and digest every possible source of information on these vital subjects.

"At the conclusion of its 1959 session, the National Conference voted to become international in character. If there was one motivating factor behind this decision it was the hope that weekly editors can pool their resources in the bitter fight for peace. We can exchange ideas and experiences gained in reading, listening and in travel. Although we may speak in different tongues, we speak the same language.

"The editor who does not take advantage of every opportunity to keep abreast of history beyond the confines of his circulation area and give his readers the benefit of what he has learned is not fulfilling his obligation as a newspaperman. It is not enough to cry that his voice is a small one. Many small voices make a giant chorus."

The Department of Journalism of Southern Illinois University will again sponsor the five-day summer workshop of the International Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors in Carbondale on July 17 through July 22. Participation will be limited to 25 weekly newspaper editors with persons already accepted for membership in the Conference receiving first consideration. Should there be sufficient interest a second unit will be added.

Activities of the Conference workshop are built around a series of discussions based upon problems confronted by the editorial writer and presided over by a discussion leader who is a specialist in the field

The Village Bell

By Henry Beetle Hough

741

I

In a few more months will occur a date of particular moment to two of the world's inhabitants, my wife and myself, since it will mark the completion of forty years since we arrived on the Island of Martha's Vineyard to become editors and publishers of the Vineyard Gazette. This span is one that necessarily invites the formulating of contrasts.

Our arrival was in the springtime, and the earliest event of moment that we reported was the Memorial Day parade. Long afterward, in "Country Editor," I wrote of the exercises at the steamboat wharf in honor of the heroes who had died at sea.

"No one could hear much of the prayer or the ritual, but when they were over the children advanced, still two by two, to the edge of the wharf and threw out upon the morning tide their bouquets of lilac.

"There was nothing but sunlit peace along the water front. No boats moved from their moorings. No trucks drove past. The air stirred, as the air always stirs over the water, and the salt tang was mixed with the scent of lilacs. Salt, cordage, tarred nets, old wood, and lilacs. The water itself was a deep, shining blue, one of the perfect colors of the world, and although it was calm it was also restless with the running of the tide. The flowers moved gently out past the point, out past the harbor light, as far as the eye could follow, to the sea."

After the second World War had risen and gone past like the worst of storms, Betty stood on the same wharf on another thirtieth of May; but it was now the town dock, for the steamboats no longer ran to Edgartown. Again the children, another generation, let fall their lilac garlands. As the old ritual ended, a woman bystander remarked indignantly that flowers should have been dropped from planes.

"Why didn't they?" she demanded.

"I suppose," said Betty, "they prefer to have these things the way they have always been."

"Well," said the bystander, "we do live in the air age."

The total reply that goes beyond sentiment and reason alike, the irony of ironies.

II

It does seem odd, looking back upon the journalistic ambitions of our youth and our feelings of other years, to be supporting some course of action because it is habitual. Traditionalism plays a larger part than I had ever dreamed it could, and I am reluctant to see changes in houses, streets, wharves, trees, and so on that have stood for years, or in some old fashion.

It is a sad principle that one's standard should be formed upon the model of the current way of life, as if what is current is always best. We notice that children are brought up to it, and most people find it at least a comfortable sort of functionalism. Who is not tempted to accept the inevitable and go under with a clear conscience, joining in the celebration of the new times?

But there is really no such thing as modern life—there is only life. And traditionalism is not solely what it is taken to be by the young and impatient, an acquiescence in what we have known best, or an avoidance of fresh challenge, or a congealing of the mind and the aesthetic sense. It is, apart from these and usually even more, something that has made possible the living we like. To depart from it means a change of life that we do not want to make. We cling to things that suit us.

For change to be seen as progress is the preferred order to any day, especially of this one. Change is supposed to break up the old glacial jams and send new streams coursing. Ironically, now, we see it as the arch perpetrator of a new conformity. The triumph of mass communications presses upon us a monolithic modern culture. To see all as in and of one world is the fulfillment of a historic humanitarian dream, but to see the world as all one—in habits, outlook, humor, furnishings, diet, hopes, expectations, and ideas—becomes frightening.

Yet do we not live in the air age, the atomic age, the space age? Sould not the planes have come to drop flowers on Memorial Day?

III

The country newspaper in times past was always a specializer in differences. True, it invariably ad-

Forty years ago Mr. Hough left Madison Avenue for Martha's Vineyard, the island off the coast of Massachusetts, where he has since edited the Vineyard Gazette. His book, Country Editor, is the classic of the community press.

vocated a bigger and better town, as if with the application of the proper amount of enterprise and new capital the town could readily become another New York or Boston or Chicago, but this was the duty paid to ambition. The newspaper couldn't help being an exponent of differences because the editor himself was distinct and different. So was the town, at heart.

No one told the editor to be different, and no one argued that he shouldn't be. He just was—and so with the town, for towns evolved slowly, and their character grew from within.

It seems to me that a good deal of the individuality of the towns was due to the "characters;" all towns had them, but I don't think this is true today. Mass communications and centralized school systems have tended to make those old individual differences obsolete. No wonder—so many of them were absurd.

There was an old lady we knew who, when a neighbor had a limb sawed from one of her trees, made him nail it on again. She was a "character," and the present day does not know her like.

The historic individual who opposed a new high school with plumbing on the ground that privies had been good enough for him and his friends is likewise gone. True, his disappearance might be accounted a gain, except that his opposition to new-fangled improvements was only one phase of a bitingly alert and assertive personality; and except that his place has been taken by a retired bishop and a retired general who oppose any costly school construction because our children will lead lives not in need of that kind of illumination. Is it a gain to have progressed from the stubborn and contrary to the glib and rationalizing?

This new age in which we live, by whatever name it may be called, is one of strain and disquiet. How will the rising generation of country editors—if that name can survive when almost complete ascendancy has been won by the town—conduct themselves? Are they not by training already conditioned to be not different but much alike?

Long ago when Betty and I first climbed, as proprietors, to the Gazette office upstairs over the corner grocery store, we looked ahead with a vision of progress. How else could it have been?

"The whole shop was shabby with age and use, and dignified as few establishments are dignified. Its sheafs of proofs, its worn and battered fixtures, its printing specimens pasted on the walls—all were part of a disorder which went to make up, if not some kind of orderly sum total, at least the visual evidence of a Purpose."

We felt the call, the prompting of that Purpose, as the Old Editor had felt it in his own youth. He stood aside, tolerant of our impatience. We will not be, we are not, as tolerant of the ambitious glances of youthful aspirants who visit the Gazette office of today. We read their thoughts easily, because once these thoughts were our own. Make way, modernize, let the young in years and the young in mind show what they can do—this is the space age.

The great difference is the pressure of the new conformity, the final supremacy of formula dictated by the most productive exploitation of the machine. Argue with that, if you can!

IV

"Why does not the village bell sound a knell? . . . The squirrel has leaped to another tree; the hawk has circled further off, and has now settled upon a new eyrie; but the woodsman is preparing to lay his ax at the root of that also."

These words of Thoreau's were quoted recently by Joseph Wood Krutch in a brief against the improving and developing of our natural heritage to the point of violation and beyond. But more than a physical heritage is passing more and more swiftly, and while the village bell-ringer is about it—provided he still exists—he may well ring for the death throes of the individuality of the small town.

Lest this note of pessimism seem too complete, I should supply some strand of hope or promise. Now and then something happens to recall the spirit of years past.

The other evening a public meeting was held in our town on the question of a license for a new gas station. Most of those in opposition spoke in terms of conventional rationalizations. The new gas station wouldn't be safe—well, one doesn't like them, but they have been around long enough for their safety to be established. It wouldn't be attractive in looks or smell, it would increase traffic hazards—again complaints with which modern society sympathizes though conniving in its laws to over-ride.

Then one young man arose and said he was opposed to the new station because he didn't like it. He remarked that this was the reason most people had for buying things or refusing things, or for the way they lived. The petitioner was asking the license because he wanted the gas station—for the same reason, in just as good standing, because he didn't want it, the young man was against it.

No, the selectmen disregarded this objection, but it was refreshing to have heard it presented, firmly and without apology.

The right to hold an opinion was traditionally one of the most glorious privileges of the town. May it continue to be asserted on the floor of public meetings and in the column of the weekly.

What Is A Grassroots Editor?

By Houstoun Waring

Let me give my definition of a grassroots editor.

He may live in a village, a small city, or a metropolis. What makes him qualify for the title is his nearness to his people.

He can put out a community paper in a city of five million and still be a grassroots editor. Metropolitan Chicago has 181 such editors. Greater Los Angeles boasts 230 of them. These editors operate in a well-defined community that may center around a business district, be nestled in between a lake and a river, or find its unity in a common church or ethnic group.

I know a California editor who has two communities. They are split by a freeway and the people seldom see each other. So he puts out two papers with different names.

My town of Littleton is a suburb of Denver. Two thousand of our people work out of town. Two thousand out-of-towners work in the Littleton area. It's hard to build a community spirit in a situation like this, but we manage to do so by hitting hard on the school news. With 6,800 children in our eleven schools, we have over 10,000 parents with their main interest centered in the educational and recreational program. We supply the news. They supply the community spirit.

You don't need to have a suburb or a small town to create a community. Nearly half of the 181 community papers in the Chicago area are inside the city limits. It is harder to get paid-in-advance circulation in a big city, but controlled circulation or even free circulation can be employed.

The main thing is to define your community and play it steadily week after week. There's a human need to belong, and the weekly newspaper satisfies this in 9,000 American communities.

The grassroots editor knows the public officials, the ministers, the educators, the YMCA and boy scout leaders, the businessmen and factory managers, the workers and the clerks. Unlike the city publisher, his circle is not limited to the country club and the intimate luncheon.

As a result of the close relationship between the community and the grassroots editor, the people develop a possessive feeling toward the paper. Morris Janowitz, author of **The Community Press in an Urban Setting**, discovered the affectionate regard that even Chicagoans have for their community newspapers.

Some of his interviews:

"I think the Advocate is more important than the daily papers. The dailies are filled with lies and scandals," Transit engineer.

"You feel more intimate with local papers because big papers take sides in politics," Carleton Manor man, age 31.

"My goodness, the daily paper can't take the place of the paper in the community. They have two different functions; the community paper is the only way to keep up with the local area," Taxi driver.

"You can learn all about your neighborhood. It is more important than the daily paper," Housewife, 42, in Atwater.

"That fellow writes sensible editorials. I swear by them. In fact, I take them to the shop and pin them up for the other fellows to see," Machinist, 46, Bethel Park.

"It's very neighborly, even if you don't know the people; you know the streets and you can just about figure out which house they live in," Housewife.

"We are interested in the neighborhood—that's what it gives you, names of people we know. It always has something interesting in the ward, something the city paper hasn't got, you know. It gives the local news about stores and people. You know, about churches and activities in your ward. We are going to put in a notice of the birthday of our little daughter," Father of three.

Thus we find that community papers are wanted wherever there is a community. A nation isn't a community; neither is Boston. These places are made up of communities, units where people see each other, work together, play together, worship together.

The community paper is a social center. It also has many other functions, one of the most important of which is "go-between" for civic leaders. Even in a town of 2,000 all the leaders cannot get together once a month. The weekly tells each leader what the others are doing, and he can act accordingly. This gives the community life some direction that it wouldn't have otherwise.

Editor of the Littleton (Colo.) Independent for many years, Mr. Waring has just been named a fellow of Sigma Delta Chi in recognition of his leadership as a spokesman for the grassroots press.

There is one other characteristic about the community paper. That is its independence.

Big magazines, large daily newspapers, and broadcasting stations and networks are burdened with huge overheads. Most of them dare not rock the boat by expressing new ideas. They play it safe.

The grassroots editor may lose an advertiser; he may not get the political patronage next year. But there are not many men powerful enough to put him out of business. He can say what needs to be said, and he will survive. How many others in this day of big corporations and other big institutions have this freedom?

Each year we see about us more "Men Without Voices." They are smart men; they have ideas. But they can't enter into the great debates that affect the lives of humans everywhere.

The grassroots editor traditionally exercises the independence of expression. He is often wrong but his error can be pointed out by others. What is essential is that he place his challenge in type for all to read, for all to discuss, and for all to act upon.

Politically, America is a strong nation. Without question, the grassroots editors have played a role in giving it that strength.

The Lovejoy Award

. . . . . On July 20, 1959, John F. Wells, editor and publisher of the weekly **Arkansas Recorder** of Little Rock, received under auspices of Southern Illinois University the Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award. The 1959 Lovejoy Award, which climaxed the fifth annual Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors, at Giant City State Park, Illinois, bears the name of the young abolitionist editor who was shot and killed at Alton, Illinois, on November 7, 1837, as he defended the precious printing press of his weekly Observer from a largely pro-slavery mob determined to destroy it.

Editor Wells of Little Rock received the Lovejoy Award because he persisted in his demand for a thorough investigation of the defeat of Brooks Hays for re-election as representative in Congress, in November 1958, in a last minute, write-in campaign. Editor Wells was convinced that Brooks Hays' defeat was the result of a "conspiracy" carried out with numerous voting irregularities. The Lovejoy Award citation commended the weekly publisher for continuing in his "active support of law and order and attacking, through the columns of his newspaper, what he believed to be fraudulent election procedures, although confronted by personal unpopularity, political disfavor, and economic reprisals."

One consequence of John Wells' efforts was that he lost a state contract to print a digest of bills in the Arkansas General Assembly. Another result was that his paper's reporter was barred from the press desk on the floor of the Arkansas House of Representatives. All this happened because Editor Wells did not leave it to the large city publications to show all the courage, but demonstrated that a weekly editor in the South "could face up to power and wrath" and take the penalities as part of the price of "devotion to the high calling of journalism." He had the satisfaction of knowing that the congressional investigation of the strange election owed a great deal, if not its life, to him.

—Irving Dilliard in Journal of Southern History

Citation

Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for Courage in Journalism

For devotion to the high calling of journalism so great as to cause him to face up to the power and the wrath of his Governor, his State Legislature, a large faction of his political party, and the public opinion of his state;

For risking public misunderstanding and identification with a side of an issue for which he had no sympathy, in order that he might advocate a principle in which he believed;

For persisting in active support of law and order and for attacking, through the columns of his newspaper, what he believed to be fraudulent election procedures, although confronted with personal unpopularity, political disfavor and economic reprisals;

As an example to editors everywhere, and particularly to editors of weekly newspapers in the United States;

As an inspiration to students of journalism;

The Department of Journalism of Southern Illinois University presents the 1959 Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for Courage in Journalism to John F. Wells of the Little Rock, Arkansas Recorder.

John F. Wells, Of Little Rock

Gratification is much too mild a word to express fully the RECORDER's feeling at this hour. More important, though, has been a resolve growing out of attendance at the Conference of Weekly Newspaper Editors, either to return the RECORDER to its original purposes or to abandon it. Here, privileged to associate with more than a score of weekly editors from a dozen states and Canada, each an individualist and a leader forthright in conviction and expression, we have come back to the basic idea that promoted the establishment of the RECORDER in May 1949.

This newspaper was planned as a medium for dissemination of data on the routine business of government which as a rule gets no attention from the daily press and wire services. Within a month after the first issue was off the press, we were involved in checking irregularities in state purchases. Since that time we have never been able to resume what we projected as our primary function.

At the conference, the editors have displayed keen interest not so much in what the RECORDER has accomplished or sought to achieve by a critical approach in governmental operations as in how it has gathered and transmitted information about the state's utilization of taxes and regulatory authority. Their interest has revived our determination to resume what we regard as the normal, essential service of the RECORDER.

As the years have passed, and our time has been taken up more and more with controversy and criticism, the RECORDER has dropped many of the regular departments which once occupied these pages. Each time it was a case of measuring the cost of time and money against the extent to which readers made use of the information.

Now we propose to reverse this trend—or else!

Whether or not it is the RECORDER or its present management that does the job, it is one that should be done.

—Arkansas Recorder, July 24

Letter from John F. Wells, October 25:

. . . . . since I am so controversial a figure under conditions where I cannot hold up my end of the controversies as they arise, I concluded that in fairness to everybody I should give somebody with fewer enemies an opportunity to make the RECORDER do the job it should be doing, and receive the advertising patronage, as well as circulation support, it should have. John Cottrell, the purchaser is a conscientious business man . . . . . .

Roll Of Honor

The Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for Courage in Journalism

1956

Mabel Norris Reese, TOPIC, Mount Dora, Florida

1957

Horace V. Wells, Jr., COURIER-NEWS, Clinton, Tennessee

1958

J. Wilcox Dunn, PRINCESS ANNE FREE PRESS, Virginia Beach, Virginia

1959

John F. Wells, ARKANSAS RECORDER, Little Rock, Arkansas

Other Nominees in 1959

William R. Dunaway, Times, Aspen, Colo.
Milton K. Fried, Delaware Coast Press, Rehoboth Beach, Del.
Weimar Jones, Press, Franklin, N. C.
Earl E. Neiberger, Putnam County Herald, Cookeville, Tenn.

That editor who wills to please
Must humbly crawl upon his knees,
And kiss the hand that beats him;
Or if he dares presume to walk,
Must toe the mark that others chalk,
And cringe to all who meet him.
—Lansingburgh (N.Y.) Gazette, July 28, 1829

Whatever Happened To The Country Press?

By John C. Obert

Far too many of the nation's 9,000 country editors share a grand illusion. They think they run the country. They write and produce home-town newspapers read by 75,000,000 people, and the irony of the illusion lies in the fact that a good many of the duly elected officials who actually do run the country are as beguiled as the editors. They, too, believe, or pretend to believe, that the country press runs the country.

This mutually-held illusion is just that, for the once unquestioned influence of this segment of the press in national affairs began to wane a quarter of a century ago and today is all but gone. Moreover, the editors have only themselves to blame, for it was their failure to keep abreast of the ideological times which ultimately cost the country press the ear of the public and politician alike. Yet the myth, nourished as it is by the naive or calculated utterances of the politician, persists to this day.

Twenty-five years ago, John Perry, then president of the American Press Association, declared that:

"The force that controls this country of ours in the long run is the rural editor in his capacity as spokesman for sixty million Americans who live and earn their living on the farms and in the villages and towns of 5,000 population or less. It is not necessary to take my word for it. Ask any politician whom you know well enough to tell you the truth . . . The politician, if he is above peanut size, will tell you that he worries little about what the big city papers say; but let even half a dozen weeklies in his home town or district open on him and he pulls down the lid on his desk in Washington, Springfield, St. Paul or Jefferson City, and takes the next train home to see what he has done."

This was said in 1933, perhaps the last year it could lay claim to any validity. For the depression, the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt, the ominous stirrings overseas were ushering in a new era. The bottom had fallen out of the national economy, the world had begun to shrink and somehow, the pre-Rooseveltian American ethic, an ethic anchored in concepts of property rights transcendent and Fortress America, seemed suddenly inadequate. It was. And the majority of Americans found it prudent to move into the new era behind the gallant man from Hyde Park. Not so the country press.

Shrewd enough to take advantage of technological advances in publishing, home-town editors adopted new and lively formats, developed lucrative job printing sidelines, struggled through the depression and successfully fended off latter-day sorties into their trade territories by big dailies, radio and television. But all the while the country press was keeping its business head above water, it was floundering in the floodtide of the ideological revolution of the thirties and forties by cleaving to an era which departed, for better or for worse, with Calvin Coolidge. And thus was lost the country press's cherished prerogative of "running the country."

But neither the rural editor nor the politician seems ready to surrender the grand illusion. Listen to this Midwest Congressman discussing the subject a few years ago:

"The power of the country press in Washington surprises me. During my two terms I have been impressed with it constantly . . . The lobby, the big railroad lawyers and that class of people realize the power of the press, but they hate it. I have heard them talk about it and shake their heads and say 'Too much power there!' The press is more powerful than money."

The politician who still talks about the alleged power and influence of the country press does so for one of two reasons—neither of them valid. Either he's inherited this hairy bromide from bygone politicians and has never bothered to examine it in today's context, or he's been unduly impressed by this admittedly startling statistic: 75 per cent of the membership of the United States Senate, 61 per cent of the House membership and 60 per cent of the nation's state legislators are put into office by voters in towns of under 10,000 population. Now the one thing virtually every small town has is a newspaper, and the politician seeking common denominators within his campaign territory woos the home-town editors by paying lip-service to the mythical power of the country press.

But paying lip-service to a myth is one thing and reality another. The time has come to force the question of what the politician and the country edi-

(continued on page 12)

John C. Obert is editor of the Park Region Echo, Alexandria, Minnesota. He was a Nieman fellow in 1937. He received the top N. E. A. award for editorials in 1958.

Liberalism And The Country Press

By Weimar Jones

John Obert has given us country editors a jolt. Well, more power to him. An occasional jolt is good for the soul.

And there's enough truth in what he says to warrant some soul-searching. For many of us, no doubt, are ill-informed; some of us, perhaps, are stupid; a few of us, maybe, suffer from the environmental "rigidity of rural ratiocination," and all of us, collectively and individually, often are inconsistent.

But is John, a lovably earnest and intense person, unduly alarmed about the state of the country editor's soul—and his influence?

Alas' he says, the country press has lost the influence that once enabled it to "run the country."

Well, now, has it? I'm inclined to doubt that, because I don't think you can lose something you never had. To say that the country press runs—or ever ran—the country is, it seems to me, a bit absurd. For country editors go off in too many different directions. Witness country editor John Obert, on the one hand, and the conservative editors he complains of, on the other.

I doubt, even that the daily press runs—or ever ran—the country. Witness how F. D. R., opposed by a constantly growing majority of daily newspapers, won four elections in a row.

Alas' he says, the country editor holds on to the illusion that he still "runs the country."

I doubt that, too. Except for a few loud-mouths, I doubt if the country editor ever thought he ran the country. My complaint about the country editor, in fact, is not that he over-rates, but under-rates, his influence. Witness the number of country weeklies that still run no editorials, and the larger number that run only a few. Witness, too, the mild, sometimes almost apologetic, tone of those they do run.

Alas' he says, the country editor has only himself to blame; nobody listens to him any more because he "deals in ideas as outmoded as celluloid collars and high-button shoes."

Well, maybe . . .

* * *

John thanks heaven the country press does not run the country. I thank heaven for that, too—but for different reasons.

I am thankful, first of all, that NO one group runs the country—at least, not for long. Not even those who call themselves liberals. Witness the enactment of labor control legislation within months after the liberals' victory in the last Congressional elections.

And I thank heaven the country press doesn't run the country because that relieves me of the responsibility of playing god for the readers of our newspaper. Most of them accept, modify, or reject my editorial conclusions and the goals I urge, just about as they deserve. Knowing that, I holler all I want to without trembling in fear I may be sending the country to hell.

I doubt if the press, country or city, ever molds public opinion, in the way the potter molds clay. For that, we can all be thankful, because the press too many times is wrong. More often than it molds, I suspect, the press reflects public opinion. So if some country newspapers seem conservative, it's a good bet that's the way a lot of their readers think.

But I do think the press has influence. And because I have faith in the one thing that makes it possible for anybody to believe in the democratic system—the honesty and good sense of the majority of average citizens—I am convinced its influence is great or small in proportion to how honest and wise and right it is.

Well, is whatever influence the country press had once "today all but gone"—lost because the country editor has failed to "keep abreast of the ideological times?"

That question—and the evidence cited to support an affirmative answer—brings me to something else I thank heaven for—the willingness of the country editor, relying on his common sense, sometimes to say "I don't believe it!"; to say it even in the face of what appears to be expert opinion and considerable evidence. That's what I'm saying now.

I don't believe the country press stands convicted, because, while I question nobody's good faith, I don't believe the evidence against it.

Much of that evidence is in the form of conclusions based on **American Press Magazine** polls; some of it is in the form of statements that appear to be unsupported.

Weimar Jones is editor of the Franklin (N. C.) Press and a past president of the North Carolina Press Association. He was a 1959 nominee for the Elijah Parish Lovejoy Award for Courage in Journalism.

I discount the results—complimentary or uncomplimentary—of the polls on three grounds:

(a) A polling agency that is sure of the answers it will get before it asks the questions is suspect as to objectivity in phrasing the questions and in interpreting the answers.

(b) Some of the conclusions are so fantastically improbable as to challenge belief. Take that statement that 73 per cent of all country editors contend "private business would do a better job of running the Post Office Department than the government." The obvious inference is that nearly three-fourths of the nation's country editors favor turning the Post Office Department over to private business. Yet if it came to a vote—and that's the test—does anybody believe that large a proportion of any group would vote that way?

(c) Ever since the 1948 Presidential election, I've been skeptical of polls; nor did the way the voters made monkeys of the pollsters in the recent British election restore my faith in the dependability of polls. And if the professionals sometimes can be so misleading, surely I'll be pardoned for hesitating to accept American Press polls as gospel.

Then there is the apparently unsupported assumption that the country press opposes legislative reapportionment. By so doing, it is argued, the country editor "forced the frustrated Democratic party to take its zeal for governing to Washington." Thus it is country editor, the argument continues, who must accept a big share of the blame for "big government." Maybe so; but for a fellow without influence, that was quite an accomplishment!

Actually, is the country editor opposed to reapportionment? That happens to be a subject I have long been interested in; and, having served on a state commission to study the problem, it's one I've been in close touch with.

Yet, so far as I have been able to learn, no country editor in my state opposes—or, in recent years, has opposed—reapportionment. On the other hand, some of the most damning indictments of legislators for failing to reapportion, have come not from North Carolina's daily newspapers, but from the little country weeklies.

Is it likely that the country press in my state is so different from that in other states that the editorial sentiment would be all one way in North Carolina and all the other way in all other states?

* * *

All this, though, begs the real question. The one important question is:

Has the country press lost its liberalism, and thereby lost its soul?

No statistics will answer that one. In a sense, it is a question that only the individual editor can answer for himself.

In the 20's and on up into the 30's, liberals—including this one—were militantly indignant at the injustice suffered by labor. That injustice has been remedied—maybe over-remedied.

In the 50's, and back into the 40's, liberals have been militantly indignant at the injustice suffered by the Negro. That injustice is being remedied.

Yet you'd think, from what some so-called liberal congressmen say and the way they vote, that liberalism begins with labor and ends with the Negro. If legislation is pro-labor or pro-Negro, it's right—nothing else matters!

Those two causes, in fact, plus the technique of big spending and faith in the federal government as a do-all, end-all—just about cover today's liberal program, in so far as it is politically organized.

If liberalism means always wearing the right labels and always blindly supporting the sacrosanct cause, then the country press is illiberal. For many a country editor is convinced that the labels have become meaningless. He recalls, too, how often the liberal cause of yesterday has become the target of liberalism today. Specifically, many country editors oppose some pro-labor legislation; their influence—and that of those they speak for—must, indeed, be partially responsible for the recently enacted labor control law. Too, some country editors—and they aren't all in the South—have held their noses at the means sometimes used toward the end of justice for the Negro.

Twenty-five years ago, it was easy to distinguish the liberal from the conservative. The liberal, confident in his faith in freedom, was quick to say of any situation: "This principle is right—hang the consequences!" The conservative of that day, a timid soul, as promptly said: "These are the consequences—hang the principle!" Could that be why conservatism has so long been under a cloud?

Who can tell the difference today? We find the so-called conservative championing the principles that are the only basis for real liberalism. And we find so-called liberals deserting those principles to achieve a liberal end. Witness the determined effort of liberal leaders, when a civil rights bill was being written in Congress, to deny the right of trial by jury to defendants in civil rights cases—as though anybody would have that right, for long, unless everybody had it! Scores of similar instances could be cited.

* * *

If you mean by liberalism what the word means, then the answer to the question about the country press may be different. For if liberate means "to

free," surely genuine liberalism is faith in freedom, and programs toward greater freedom.

Any real freedom, of course, must be freedom for all. Yet what significance has group freedom unless it applies to me? How much meaning have the concepts of freedom of religion and of speech and of the press, unless they are my freedom—to worship in my own way, to say what I think, and to write and print what I will? Freedom, that is, must be stated in principle, applicable to all; but, paradoxically, it is no freedom at all, except as it belongs to the individual.

It seems to me today's liberals have forgotten that. I think they may have forgotten, too, that while conditions and problems change, principles do not. And they give every evidence of having forgotten that the real liberal seeks justice for all minorities. That includes the right of the man—stupid as he may seem—who insists on both the opportunity to work and the right to make his own decision about whether he will or will not join a union. It includes too, justice for a geographical minority, like the South, as well as for a racial minority, like the Negro. Isn't it just as illiberal to say no Southerner may be President as to say no Catholic may be?

There is plenty of that kind of liberalism in America today; but, generally speaking, it has no voice.

That situation provides the country press with its great opportunity.

* * *

Nothing is so encouraging about the country press as the fact it so often is so inconsistent; the man who insists the remedy must fit the principle, instead of the other way 'round, always is seemingly inconsistent.

It is encouraging, too, that here and there the country editor stubbornly insists on asking embarrassing questions; and since those questions so often go back to the basic principles on which we gained and have held our American freedoms, he sometimes may seem blindly conservative.

He asks practical questions like these:

How can you defend a farm program that subsidizes corporation type of farming to create even bigger surpluses?

Isn't it time the American people were given facts and figures about foreign aid? About how much good it is doing? About how much of it is wasted? About how much of it is used to bolster dictatorships nobody wants?

Does it make sense, when inflation is robbing many individuals of their economic freedom, to feed inflation with big spending?

And penetrating questions like these:

How much liberalism is there in an economic system that puts its entire emphasis on material things and that boasts of the ever-growing number of mothers of young children in its labor force? Does that safeguard the individual rights of the children to a sense of true values and to a home, in the real sense of that word—the only backgrounds that assure stability?

How much liberalism is there in the system of pressures, often by government itself, toward mass conformity? Does that enlarge the freedom of the individual?

How much liberalism is there in a system that permits a military bureaucracy to determine what is wise for the people to know—how far they can be trusted? Does that trend, which is fast spreading to other bureaucracies, make for greater freedom; or is it, instead, a form of paternalistic dictatorship?

Maybe some of those are naive, even foolish questions. Maybe all of them are. But the very fact they are being asked is a good omen for liberalism. Because all freedom begins and ends with freedom of the mind; and all intellectual freedom begins and ends with the asking of questions.

* * *

Isn't it just possible it is not the country editor who is behind the times, but some of the more vocal so-called liberal leaders?

Whatever the answer, this I know:

In today's world of confusion and doubt, of meaningless labels and conformity, the country press has the greatest opportunity in its history. At a time when more and more people have less and less confidence in the daily press (with the exceptions of a few notable newspapers) and TV has discredited itself, the country press can become both a stabilizing influence and a dynamic, constructive force.

And even if it does nothing but ask questions—the questions almost nobody else will ask—it will be the very embodiment of liberalism, in the best sense of that oft-missed word.

Whatever Happened . . .

tor have been smoking for lo these many years, for sometime long ago they began blowing smoke into each others' eyes. The country press does not run the country—and thank heaven it does not. The elected official who writes or administers the laws which rule the nation is concerned only with keeping the country editor quiescent. He is neither particularly interested in nor influenced by the editor's opinions on the issues of the day, for the average country editor's opinions are so anachronous that no politician could afford to heed them and do right by his constituents—much less keep his job.

Exceptions there are, to be true. Every section of the nation boasts some influential country newspapers, newspapers edited by enlightened, lucid, articulate and courageous people who have kept abreast of the political, social and economic times and whose ability to communicate effectively with reader and lawmaker is the envy of many big city papers. But these rare exceptions serve only to point up the inarticulate ineffectiveness of the vast majority of the country press which still deals in ideas as outdated as celluloid collars and high-button shoes.

Recently the American Press magazine paid dubious, albeit sincere, tribute to the archaic attitudes of the country editor by describing these attitudes as manifestations of a "stubborn Americanism." The magazine used the results of 25 opinion surveys it has made since 1953 to prepare "An Authenticated Portrait of America's Typical Country Editor" and said:

"Of course, we do not pretend to believe that all country editors are alike . . . but when we think in terms of majorities—and it is majorities which dictate government policy and social mores—it becomes increasingly obvious that the majority of country editors in all sections of the country think alike to the extent that we know before a poll on a controversial subject has been launched how the majority of country editors are likely to vote. For example, we know that they will oppose any legislation calling for increased welfare activity on the part of the federal government; that they will fight hand-outs to any groups . . . and that they will back any moves to shift power from the federal to state governments. In general, their roots are firmly embedded in the America of a past era—an America which thrived on such words as self-reliance and independence, and they stubbornly resist all movements wherein social groups might be benefited but at the expense of the individual's freedom. 'Mollycoddling' by government is one of the pet hates of the country editor. His heroes are the founding fathers of our nation who believed in a minimum amount of government and a maximum amount of individual freedom. He has swallowed hard to accept Social Security; he accepts foreign aid with many misgivings (Note: 49 per cent would have all foreign aid terminated); farm supports are contrary to his philosophy; he is a champion of free enterprise and the freer the better."

Were it consistent, one might find the very hoariness of this opinion pattern admirable. But it is not. The prime inconsistency, of course, is found in the country editor's dedicated resistance to "big government"—except as it relates to organized labor. Here the country editor wants the federal government to move in fast and move in big.

Eighty per cent of the country editors favor more government control over unions. Ninety-one per cent support compulsory publication of union financial statements; 86 per cent urge the government to poll union members before a strike is called; 54 per cent believe in outlawing strikes in communications industries; 81 per cent oppose "guaranteed annual wage"; and 86 per cent back "right to work" legislation.

Country editors stand in awe of business and industry. Sixty-four per cent of the editors would like to see business taxes reduced, but almost all of them would like to see taxes on cooperatives increased. No less than 73 per cent contend that private industry would do a better job of running the Post Office Department than the government. Their manifest scorn for the government sometimes reaches ridiculous proportions. Witness the fact that 77 per cent of the editors oppose fair trade price-protection laws which would seem to benefit most those small merchants with whom the editor lives and does business.

The most fascinating incongruity, however, is to be found in the country editors' opposition to any moves which would shift power from the state to the federal government. This seems logical on the surface, for if there is one area of government in which the country press still wields some influence, it is in the state legislatures. Yet the influence it has here, ironically, has boomeranged to build up the federal government.

By opposing reapportionment measures which would grant equitable representation in state legislatures to helpless under-represented metropolitan districts, the country press has helped perpetuate rural control of legislatures. Thus it has been instrumental in forcing the metropolis to turn to the federal government for the aid it must have to pro-

vide minimal services for its residents. Discussing this situation recently, United States Municipal News said, "We respectfully suggest to those who deplore local dependence on federal aid that they address themselves to the state legislatures, for therein rests the power to permit the city to become financially independent."

Moreover, it would seem axiomatic that dominance of state government by conservative rural legislators, a dominance achieved long ago through calculated gerrymandering, forced the frustrated Democratic party to take its zeal for governing to Washington and ultimately helped create the "big government" bogey which the country press deplores and decries today.

Though these seeming paradoxes in motive and result have been pointed out to the country, the press continues to turn a deaf ear. To understand why, it is necessary to examine the provincial chauvinism which characterizes so much of this segment of the press.

Much has been made, for instance, of the rural editor's "closeness to the people," his accessibility to grass roots opinion, if you will. Yet it is this very closeness to the everyday affairs of the people, his people, which has given the country editor political myopia and has left the forest of many trees completely out of focus. Historically geared to serve only the community in which it functions, the country press turns its eyes away from the world beyond. Insulated, by geography and by personal inclination, from the broadening influences which lie outside his circulation area, the country editor too often moves in a cramped sphere populated by Main Street Babbitts who mirror his own opinions. The country editor is suspicious, almost paranoically so, of the "outside world" and foremost among the many alien objects of suspicion is the city slicker in government. The rural legislator is "one of us," a known commodity. So long as the rural legislator controls state government, the world will continue as the provinces want it to continue—or so the country editor believes. This is why he stubbornly ignores the cogent, morally-justified arguments for reapportionment—even when he is shown he is cutting off his political nose to spite his political face.

But if the country editor is consistent in one thing, he is consistent in his readiness to wield the face-spiting knife. Examples abound. Last year, for instance, the Minneapolis Tribune assigned its crack Negro reporter, Carl Rowan, to do a series of articles on the status and future of Minnesota's small towns. Rowan spent weeks touring the state, talking with farmers, bankers, businessmen and civic leaders. When he returned, he wrote a series aptly titled "Grow or Die"—and promptly kicked loose an outburst of denial and protest which was to leave the conscientious Rowan bereft of even his own editors' support. Yet Rowan was right, and no one should have known it better than the country editors who led the attack upon him.

For what with depressed dairy prices in this dairy farming state, with the number of farm families which traditionally provided the trade foundation for the rural community rapidly diminishing, with fewer and fewer on-the-farm jobs, and with an improved road and highway system bringing the lure of the big city ever nearer, a good many of Minnesota's small towns are moribund. Rowan concluded that the small town can save itself only by admitting that farm trade alone can no longer sustain its economy, that new industry, developed at home or imported, must be encouraged, and that the small town businessman must pay higher wages to stimulate local buying and to discourage his employees from moving to the metropolis.

From the cries of outrage uttered by the country press, one would have thought Rowan himself had struck the blow to kill the small town. Yet the reaction was predictable, for few country editors would stand still while a city reporter told them what was wrong with their towns. The country editor is convinced that the farmer's troubles would be over if he'd just "get more efficient." He fears that industry will bring labor unions and that labor unions will bring strikes, violence and hoodlums. And he suspects that higher wage standards will make employees uppity and disturb the comfortable, if decadent, social structure of his community.

The editor is inclined to ooze treacle about the virtues and blessings of small town living, but the sincerity of his interest in preserving rural Americana must remain unfortunately suspect so long as he maintains his stubborn opposition to the very things which can save it—specifically, a program which would keep farmers on the land and in the Main Street stores and a program of industrial development and higher wages to take up the slack in his town's economy.

Fortunately, in the Midwest at least, the politician once again has ignored the country editor and has generally supported legislation which would help save the rural community the editor seems hell-bent to forsake. And still the myth persists that the country press calls the tune and the politician dances.

In concluding its portrait of the typical country editor, the American Press magazine says:

"In general, the country editor is a modest man. But of one thing he is very much aware: the Con-

gressmen from his district listen to him, and read what he has to say, with the closest attention. They visit him when they are home to find out 'what the people think.' And practically all rural Congressmen subscribe to the newspapers in their home districts . . . The country editor is 'a big frog in a little puddle.' Politicians, both local and national, seek his favor and support . . . His support is vital to their causes."

Perhaps Congressmen do listen to the country editor. Perhaps they do visit him when they are home. Perhaps they do subscribe to his paper. But if they do, the gestures are empty. One look at the federal legislation passed or extended in recent years and another look at the country editor's opinions on the same issues should lay once and for all the ghostly myth that the country press runs the country, for Congress has pointedly ignored the legislative recommendations of the country press in virtually every instance.

Our overseas commitments have become more and more binding. Foreign aid has been continued, Social Security benefits liberalized and extended, and oppressive labor bills defeated. Expanded federal aid to education seems both imperative and imminent. The government still operates a farm program of sorts, and private industry hasn't yet taken over from the Post Office.

Moreover, the country press, reflecting the almost poignant conviction of the late Senator Robert Taft that the nation is basically arch-conservative, was repudiated once again last November when liberals scored another convincing victory at the polls. The election lesson was lost to the editors, however, for the consensus of those polled by the American Press in December was that "the people voted for Santa Claus and against inadequate Republican leadership."

The influence of the country press on federal legislation and national elections will remain negligible until that segment of the press relaxes what one alliterative observer calls "the rigidity of rural ratiocination," broadens its ideological horizons and reassumes its place as a realistic, imaginative and informed molder and mobilizer of the opinions of 75,000,000 readers. This does not mean that the country press must abandon its traditional conservatism. It does mean that its conservatism must be brought into step with the times.

After all, the most influential of all country editors was, except for a brief flirtation with Progressivism, a life-long Republican. But William Allen White once asked "What's The Matter With Kansas?" in an editorial which should be required reading for today's benighted editors. White saw the challenge of "Grow or Die" even then, and though he remained a spokesman for the rural community to the end of his days, he left the door open to the outside world, kept Emporia and Kansas in proper perspective and by so doing never surrendered his considerable influence in national as well as local affairs.

—Nieman Reports

The Modern Social Order

If you think we're having trouble with TV in Canada you should hear what is going on in the United States.

Trashy and inconsequential programs have taken over American television as never before, they'll tell you wherever you travel. The American TV programs are monopolizing the attention of the nation in a way that can only be described as critical. Those who watch TV planning carefully are saying that the outlook for next season is as bad, if not worse than the record since last fall. Once again they believe they are to be subjected to an almost incessant barrage of westerns, crime shows, silly situation comedies, and other forms of shallow diversion that can, if attended without selectivity, convert them into a nation of dream weavers, uninformed, uninquisitive, and painfully unequipped to face the challenges of life in an age of crisis.

THE EXTENT to which they waste time watching television has reached staggering proportions, they frankly admit, on all sides. In many households the electronic Svengali in the living room or den casts its spell for as long as one-quarter of each day.

To meet the requirements of this unreasonable demand for diversion poses a gigantic problem for any television station. It would be fatuous to expect that, confronted with the need for supplying programs to fill the day and night hours, the telecasters could maintain constantly high standards even if they tried.

AND NO ONE should attempt to deny the advisability of having a certain number of adventure programs (including westerns) on the air, as well as fun and games and other frothy items that are not cerebral in their approach. Greece had its Aristophanes as well as its Aeschylus. Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew has lived along with his Hamlet.

But, our American friends insist, the television scales have been tilted far off balance. Children are simply getting the wrong kind of perspective of life. Adults, too, are subject to a deplorable system of values maintained by broadcasters in response to what the public appears to prefer on the TV screen. —Yorkton (Sask.) Enterprise

Walt Whitman As A Country Editor

By C. H. MacLachlan

In the spring of 1838 a tall, thickset and rather awkward young man bought a printing press and some fonts of type in New York and established a weekly newspaper plant on the ground floor of a barn in Huntington, New York. For the next year he brought out, perhaps irregularly, issues of a four-page weekly newspaper in the customary format of that period. Then, becoming restless, he sold his printing equipment and left for New York in search of work.

No bound file of that year has ever turned up. Nothing is known of the contents of those issues except for unimportant quotations in contemporary papers. It has been suggested that he failed; that the enterprise died of the lack of attention—or cash. Weekly newspapers were not very prosperous and he might have envisaged greener fields in New York. Probably no one today would even care if it were not for the fact that the young editor was Walt Whitman. The newspaper—now in its 122nd year—was **The Long-Islander.**

Many years later, in **Specimen Days,** Whitman referred to this experiment in journalism in the following account:

"My first real venture was **The Long-Islander** in my own beautiful town of Huntington, in 1839. I was about twenty years old. I had been teaching country schools for two or three years in various parts of Suffolk and Queens counties, but liked printing; had been at it while a lad, learn'd the trade of compositor, and was encouraged to start a paper in the region where I was born. I went to New York, bought a press and types, hired some little help, but did most of the work myself, including the presswork. Everything seem'd turning out well; (only my own restlessness prevented me gradually establishing a permanent property there). I bought a good horse, and every week went all around the country serving my papers, devoting one day and night to it. I never had happier jaunts —going over to the south side, to Babylon, down the south road, across to Smithtown and Commack, and back home. The experiences of those jaunts, the dear old-fashion'd farmers and their wives, the stops by the hay fields, the hospitality, nice dinners, occasional evenings, the girls, the rides through the brush, come up in my memory to this day."

It is not difficult to picture the Whitman of that day, probably already bearded, not outwardly ambitious—periodically the paper may not have been published at all—astride his mare, Nina, following a quadrangular 50-mile route peddling his papers; stopping to chat with a farmer on his way to market or knocking at another's door while chickens cackled in the yard.

The route to Babylon to Smithtown to Commack and back to Huntington which took him a day and a night to traverse offered ample distractions for any youth from a farming and fishing town. For Whitman, who was never intended for schedules or timetables, it was ideal. On these jaunts he may well have begun assembling the puzzle pieces that joined to make his vision.

Not everyone was inclined to view the young Whitman this kindly, however. Even at this stage in his life, he already had the reputation for laziness that was to dog him most of his years. To some he appeared faltering and uncertain of himself. He was slow to develop emotionally and intellectually. At 16 he was as large as a full grown man, but he must have had the clumsiness of a boy who has outgrown his strength. Even at 20, in Jamaica, the wife of an employer complained of his falling over his big feet in her dining room.

There seemed then little of the "foreground" mentioned by Emerson in his enthusiastic letter to Whitman after reading the first edition of **Leaves of Grass** in 1855. "I greet you," Emerson wrote, "at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere for such a start."

But the foreground was there and must have begun in Whitman's early youth. Before his **Long-Islander** adventure there had been strong influences at work upon him. Walt had no religion, but Quakerism was in his background and one of his heroes was Elias Hicks, the great Quaker rebel. As a boy in his father's home, he developed passionate sympathies. Brutal whippings in school stirred him to anger. In the seven schools in which he taught between 1835 and 1841 Whitman never used corporal punishment. The elder Whitman was a liberal and

The Long Islander, of Huntington, N. Y., is edited today by C. H. MacLachlan, who keeps alive the Whitman tradition with an annual special edition.

a patriot and Walt as a youth was exposed to a climate of opinion that upheld the rights of man, the sanctity of the individual, the dangers of privilege and the futility of rank. He hated injustice, greed and cruelty.

It should be noted that in nearby Smithtown where Walt taught school just before starting The Long-Islander, he belonged to a debating society in which he was accepted as the intellectual equal of the most prominent men in the community. These included a congressman, a member of the state legislature, two justices of the peace, and a number of professional men, business men and farmers. He took part in 11 of the 16 debates held in that winter, his side winning six times and receiving two tie decisions.

All of this and his politicking for Van Buren in 1840 are part of the foreground. Walt's dreams and musings had been jotted down in notebooks long before Leaves of Grass was published. Dreamers of dreams are often called lazy. At 19, and for many years after that, the future poet showed no signs of genius, but they were productive years for all of that. He was growing and deepening. His year as editor of The Long-Islander, his periods as a school teacher, his debating and political activities all gave the lie to the repeated taunts of laziness.

Walt began The Long-Islander immediately after he had finished a year of teaching school in another quiet hamlet, Smithtown, Long Island, some ten miles east of Huntington. It was started on June 5, 1838, not 1839 as Whitman writes in Specimen Days.

The founding was an auspicious occasion. On June 16, 1838, The Hempstead Enquirer reported: "The Long-Islander of Huntington has just made its debut, in a very good graceful and easy manner. From its columns we judge that its publisher (Mr. W. Whitman) has spared no pains to make it acceptable to the reading community. The inhabitants of Huntington have reason to congratulate themselves upon the addition of the roses in their chaplet."

The printing shop where Whitman produced The Long-Islander was on Main Street, a mere stone's throw from the present plant. Walt lived with his brother George in a room over the printing shop and at night friends gathered for games and storytelling. There was no dissipation. Walt did not smoke and drank sparingly. He was not profane. He did not attend dances. He apparently spent most of his evenings in his office or in the room upstairs. George recalled one of Walt's pastimes: "He once had a ring suspended from the ceiling. The point was to throw this ring on a hook driven in the wall. On one occasion the prize was a mince pie or twenty-five cents, and I recall that I had to go for the pie."

What was printed in The Long-Islander during Whitman's tenure as editor is a matter of conjection. It can be assumed that the five column, four-page carried news of the oyster industry which flourished on the north and south shores of Long Island, items gleaned by Whitman during delivery days, advertisements, of patent medicines, land for sale and items clipped from other newspapers and handset by Whitman, matters before the town board and perhaps an occasional bit of poetry.

However memorable the final product was, it didn't pay, and on July 20, 1839, the Enquirer had this to report on the newest rose in Huntington's chaplet; "The Long-Islander— this paper which was established in Huntington about a year since, and in consequence of the ills which newspapers are heir to, discontinued for a few months, has been revived by Mr. E. O. Crowell, who will now give the inhabitants of that town another opportunity to evince their desire to support a newspaper among themselves. We hope the editor may meet with success."

What kind of an editor was Walt? Henry Seidel Canby has said that he wrote "good editorials and literary trash for ten years after he passed out of boyhood."

It is doubtful in view of Whitman's later record as an editor—between June, 1838 and September, 1849 Walt was to sit in the editor's chair seven times—that he took up journalism just to make a living. To his mind, in his vision, freedom was more than a word. He was nonconformist from birth. Very likely, this first setback did little to dishearten him for it had given him a medium of expression. However, it is fair to say that the repeated frustrations and disappointments he suffered at the hands of newspaper publishers altered this outlook and solidified his opinion of himself as a "solitary singer."

In 1849, Whitman quit the editing business and went to work for his father building houses. His editorial career was filled with frustration and for him "one of the unluckiest newspaper editors in the history of the Fourth Estate; many different times editorial opportunities came to him, but inevitably something unfortunate happened."

We read somewhere that civilization is a system under which a man pays a quarter to park his car so he won't be fined a dollar while spending a dime for a nickel cup of coffee.

—Clinton (Tenn.) Courier-News

Influence Of The Canadian Weeklies

By Kenneth F. Pettis

Some six years ago, when the Rt. Hon. Louis J. St. Laurent was Prime Minister of Canada, the annual convention of the Ontario Weekly Newspaper Association was held in Ottawa. On that occasion, speaking to the assembled publishers who represented all shades of political thought, the Prime Minister referred to what he called the "independent character" of editorial comment which distinguished the weeklies from their daily contemporaries. The latter, he intimated, were more prone to be activated by a strictly partisan bias.

While memory of the actual words which Mr. St. Laurent used is not too precise, recollection is that he said something like this:

"Keep up your strong criticism of the government. I hope it will be constructive criticism for I assure you that all members of the administration (and this certainly includes myself) pay close heed to what the weekly press is saying. It gives us a guidance we would not like to be without because I am convinced it is based on an intimate knowledge of what your readers, and our constituents, are thinking."

This tribute to the political independence of the Canadian weekly, coming from the highest level of government, was a frank recognition of the influence of the weeklies' editorial comment on national affairs. However, it would be too much to claim that it is shared to an equal degree by all publications. There are editorials which continue to adhere strictly to the party line, which never fail to "point with pride" or "view with alarm", depending on their political allegiance. But these are in the minority. Indeed, one fault to be found with some Canadian editors is a tendency to err in the opposite direction. There is still a considerable few (and a few is too many) whose writings are not partisan but inane and colorless. These are the editors reluctant to express an opinion on any topic more controversial than the growing of roses or the maintenance of sensible speed laws on the highways; and those who feel they run grave risk of offending a large section of their readers if they do other than champion motherhood or condemn sin.

Such was not always the case. A generation ago, before rising costs put an end to "two-paper towns," vigorous partisanship was the rule. Those were the days when Grits were Grits and Tories were Tories, when each felt quite free to indulge in violent diatribes, knowing full well that his rival would be sure to take a divergent view. Amalgamation changed all that; and while it did bring into being editors who were "neutral but not independent," the great majority of Canadian leader writers have since not hesitated to praise or blame as they see fit, regardless of party. The Canadian weekly press, in general, does possess sufficient rugged independence to warrant a Prime Minister's tribute to its influence.

Properly to appreciate the extent of this influence and the cause from which it stems needs an examination of the make-up of the Canadian government in relation to the number of dailies and weeklies published in the Dominion. Canada's present population is approaching 18 million. There are 265 members elected to the House of Commons. They represent an area which stretches for 3600 miles from east to west and, apart from the cities, three members sit for constituencies of comparatively sparse populations but which are very large geographically.

Distribution of the seats in the Canadian House of Commons has always been weighted heavily in favor of the rural MP, who often represents as few as 15,000 electors. There are members who sit for as many as ten times that number. And in by far the great majority of electoral ridings no daily newspaper exists. Hence political support or rejection, not only at elections, but during the intervening sessions of Parliament, comes mainly from the columns of the weekly press.

An example of this is the electoral district where the present writer votes. Geographically it is about as large as the state of Vermont. The riding of Bruce, represented federally by one member of Parliament, has only some 19,000 enfranchised voters. There is no daily newspaper published in Bruce County. There is one published just across the riding border in an adjoining constituency; and the next nearest is in a city 100 miles away. Thus the "Voice of the People," in so far as Bruce is concerned, is expressed in the weekly press—and Bruce has only nine weeklies. Since this is true in a province as densely populated (comparatively speaking) as Ontario, which has one-third of Canada's total population, how much more is it true in western Canada,

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where voters are even more widely dispersed.

In the three prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, which stretch from the eastern boundary of Minnesota as far west as the Rockies, and from north to south for a distance as great as that from the international border to the Gulf of Mexico, there are less than 20 dailies published, as compared with 212 members of the Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association. Here is surely ample foundation for a Prime Minister's statement regarding the influence of the weeklies' editorials, since these (as has been pointed out) appear in newspapers that are located, generally, in "one-paper towns," and which, in the main, have no strong partisan leanings.

One recent example of the influence of the Canadian weekly editorial on national policies might be cited. In 1956, the Liberal government had a total strength of some 180 members. The opposition was made up of three non-cooperating groups, the largest of which held less than 50 seats. The government saw fit to introduce a bill which would have continued (perhaps perpetuated) certain emergency powers conferred on it in wartime. It was vigorously opposed by the opposition parties although these groups were numerically powerless to prevent its passing. The daily newspapers of Canada, with a few outstanding exceptions, held strictly to the party line. Liberal newspapers supported the bill; Conservative papers opposed it. The weeklies' editorials, however, were almost unanimous in their censure of what they termed an arbitrary act. After a strenuous fight over a period of several months the bill was dropped.

In the election of 1958 the Conservative party, which previously had held only 48 seats, returned the greatest number of members, but not sufficient to give it an over-all majority. In the subsequent election, held nine months later, this party gained power with the biggest majority given to any Canadian government since the confederation of provinces in 1867—a total of 209 seats in a house of 265. Certainly it would be too much to claim that the Canadian weekly editor was solely responsible for this turnover (there were scores of factors contributing to the defeat of a party which had been in power for 22 years) but it did materially assist in bringing about the change. And the weekly editor is just as prone to make his influence felt, on the other side, in four or five years time, depending on the issues of the day. The representative Canadian weekly is in no sense a "party organ". Its editor takes a pride, more often justified than not, in being "independent but not neutral."

Do Canadian weekly editorials deal with international problems?

The best answer to this question would be to state that they are beginning to do so, more than ever before in their history. The better-edited weeklies are showing an increasing tendency (to quote d'Israeli) to "think not of the parish but of the Empire."

Canada's relations with the United States, Canada's place in the British Commonwealth, the part which Canada plays in NATO and in the assembly of free nations—all are inspiring current editorial comment. While this is by no means general as yet, the alert Canadian weekly editor is keenly conscious that his readers have a growing interest in affairs that lie beyond town or county boundaries and is reflecting, when he is not actively furthering, that interest. How could he do otherwise when the sons and daughters of residents of Canadian small towns are serving with NATO forces in Europe and when boys from the back concessions are stationed in the Suez Canal Zone?

All those present at the National Conference held in Carbondale this past summer are aware that the editor of the Yorkton (Saskatchewan) Enterprise sought and obtained an interview with Mr. Harry Truman. This was featured prominently in the next issue of a weekly newspaper published in the very heart of the Canadian west, far removed from the international scene. Mr. Mayhew's action in presenting to his readers the views of a former president of the United States was perhaps unique in Canadian weekly journalism. But a few years ago it would have been unthinkable.

Crusades Are Not Cheaper By The Dozen

By Mabel Norris Reese

Almost 13 years ago, when I embarked upon my career as a "grass roots" editor, I had a fuzzy idea about two or three days spent at the office which would earn for me enough money to hire my housework done and allow to me time enough to enjoy my six-year-old daughter and participate in community life.

I was accustomed to the grind of daily journalism, so issuing a weekly would be a snap—so I thought in 1947.

In those 12-plus years since, I have found that life on a weekly is where you bed down your children on the stacking table while you toil into the night following a week in which there were six 18-hour days, and you dread the one that follows press day more than any others. It's pay day—generously so for everyone but the owners.

Perhaps, though, it wouldn't have been like that in those dozen years if I had minded my business, literally speaking. Perhaps I'd have had the time to enjoy my growing daughter, my home and community life if I had concentrated on the till, and not worried about the word "justice." I am certain, now, that my concern over justice interferred with the cash register.

I was advised time and again by wiser heads than mine to watch out for the pitfalls of "taking a stand"—that to mount a high platform of principle was taking a downward plunge economically. I refused to listen, and so I am badly bruised by all the plunges I have taken.

But I could not have done it any other way.

That's why now I have two jobs. It takes two if you're going to operate as a would-be big city journalist in the grass roots: one to eat on while the other tends to its crusading.

I'm not real sure when I began to realize the economic pinch. Maybe it was the first time I innocently used the editor's prerogative (to make a choice in a gubernatorial race, and I backed the wrong man)—economically. At least, he was not the choice of the powers that be in my town, and so I lost, for a while, a steady advertiser.

But my man got elected, and with a good majority from my town. It was quite awhile before that account came back.

Then came the election for sheriff of my county. A few days before the election, the incumbent—backed by the powers that be—hit and killed a pedestrian. I exposed the facts about the accident as related to me by a highway patrolman, including the one that the sheriff had been in "an eating and drinking place" just moments before.

That earned me a dressing down, and a real cold shoulder treatment as I made my advertising rounds for the next issue.

The sheriff was re-elected and the war was on.

When he shot and killed one Negro prisoner and seriously wounded another while returning them from the state prison for a retrial, I opened both barrels. I covered the inquest in which the sheriff contended the Negroes had tried to escape, and I used all the language at my command to describe the wounded Negro and relate his account of the shooting.

Our printing plant began to suffer from lost revenue.

Came then 1954, and the Supreme Court's desegregation decision. My next issue carried an editorial in defense of the principle behind it, and a recommendation for gradual desegregation. And I pleaded for tolerance; for cool heads to guide the transition.

There was an explosion of fire in my yard soon after this—flames licked at a great, gasoline soaked wooden cross that had been planted there. Two nights later, the Topic's office windows were smeared with big red crosses and beneath them were the initials: "KKK".

A few weeks later, I was launched on a real crusade.

Five children had been enrolled in Mount Dora's public school, and from my daughter I learned that a slight uproar had been stirred about them. There were complaints, she said, that they seemed like Negroes. But the furore died when the principal investigated their background and found they had attended a white school in their native North Carolina, and they were, in fact, of Indian descent.

But this explanation did not satisfy the sheriff.

Mabel Norris Reese, first winner of the Lovejoy Award has an office full of trophies at Mt. Dora, Florida, to show for her efforts as a crusader and a real good eating job in Daytona Beach as editorial writer for the News-Journal.

He said they looked like Negroes. He said he didn't like the shape of the nose of the oldest girl. So he ordered them out of the school.

I went on their trail and got the complete story and took pictures—sad pictures of the girl reading a book on American democracy, and of the little children clinging to the knees of their worried father.

I gave the story banner treatment, and on the editoral page I blasted the sheriff into the next county.

It looked as if I had him. It looked as if he finally was impaled upon my editorial pen. I went out on my next advertising rounds fully expecting the powers that be to say—"Well, I guess you had him pegged all along."

Instead, the shoulders were much colder; the advertisers were all so very busy; the customers were all well stocked with printing. And not a one of them mentioned the Topic's big expose.

I went back to my office and blazed forth another feature story about the Platt children and how happy they were over a Thanksgiving turkey a kind soul (me) had sent them, and I took many more pictures.

Meanwhile, Time magazine moved in, and the Topic's expose became national news. Florida dailies moved in, too, and the state soon was buzzing. The Miami Herald wanted to do something a bit different, so it moved in and did quite a story about the "feud" between the sheriff and the lady editor, shedding not a tear about the five children who were not allowed to go to school.

The atmosphere became horribly chilly.

The word justice, though, seemed to come out of my typewriter automatically. I could not leave it alone. Finally, it became so capitalized on the Topic's pages, that it met the eyes of enough people that money began to roll in for a defense fund. Lawyers took the case, and we filed suit to get the children back into school.

That kept the Platt Case live, so that scarcely an issue of the Topic in the months that followed came forth without a story on it.

Then the ax fell—or at least it struck a blow. I learned that the powers that be had gotten together and brought in a rival newspaper. The Mount Dora Herald sprung to life, with an office right across the street from mine, and with the printing farmed out—not to the Topic, of course. I had to sit in my office and watch the sheriff going in that office regularly to confer with the new publisher.

My husband and I tightened our belts and waded deeper into the fight. I made my advertising rounds as usual, and picked up the crums. And he printed scratch pads and tablets in lieu of the printing orders we no longer had.

Somehow, we made it through that dreadful summer, still aiming our sights on the word "justice."

A year from the date of our expose, we gleefully ran what we hoped would be the last Platt story: the finale of the case in which the judge ruled that the sheriff had produced no evidence to sustain his "charge" against the children, and that they were entitled to attend any white school of their choice.

But there was an anti-climax or two. An attempt was made by night riders to burn down the Platt home, and a couple of Air Force practice bombs were tossed into our yard.

Meanwhile the opposition paper was hard at work trying to roast me in the chilled business atmosphere. Unmercifully, it attacked me in its editorial columns, all but spelling out the hints that I was a Communist. It turned the inch given it by the powers that be into a mile of rope, and it hung itself. People became indignant, and they became increasingly more so when I refused to answer back. Rumblings were heard throughout the town, and I am sure they reached the ears of the business people.

Ads began to disappear from that paper. More and more copies of it were found in the post office waste basket.

At last, its swan song issue appeared, and accompanying the final, dying gasp at me was an editorial that blasted those who had not "kept their promises."

I bid it farewell with a 14-point head that merely said the Mount Dora Herald had ceased publication.

Peace did not return for me, however. A truce, yes—but a truce as uneasy as any the Middle East suffers, I still called shots on elections, and I still managed to back the "wrong" candidates.

And I still fought for justice in cases involving the sheriff.

There's a new one right now—one in which I am blasting him for an act so unjust that—but let us not bore you with the details. Sufficient it is to say I am again feeling the chill, despite Florida's wonderful climate.

I know the why of it in my case, of course. Here, the sheriff is regarded as the one man who can "protect" the white people from integration. And he's considered the one man who can keep the labor unions from doing anything about the low wages in the citrus industry. So he is backed blindly by the powers that be.

But what I can't understand fully about a typical American community, such as mine, is the lack of concern for justice. I can't understand why it is felt that a community newspaper should not enter into

campaigns for justice, or should not even take a stand in an election.

Communities like this still form the backbone of America, and here should be the fertile testing ground for democratic principles. For here, the people are close and interdependent. Here, if help is needed, there is no government bureau at hand to dole it out without compassion, so it must come from neighbors, and it should come embellished with compassion.

The people, in a vague sort of way, realize this, I believe. At any rate our circulation did not suffer during the Platt Case—for each punishment cancellation we received, sales at news stands went up accordingly. And the normal pace of growth was accelerated by curiosity seekers from other towns.

The people, I am convinced, were interested—but they wanted only to be bystanders. They did not relate the problem of upholding justice to themselves; they could not see that where it can be denied successfully to a lowly one among them, the next time it could creep a notch higher up the economic pole. Except for a quickly squelched protest of a teenage Sunday School class over the treatment given the Platt children, the churches were silent. However, when it was all over, an adult Sunday School class did pass a resolution naming me "Woman of the Year." I was deeply grateful, but all I could think of was how much that resolution would have helped me economically had it been issued in the height of the crusade.

What of the business community in such instances?

Really, I DO understand the attitude, while at the same time scorning it.

Business in a town the size of Mount Dora—about 5,000 then—has a constant struggle. Dailies coming into the community carry advertising from the "big city" to lure their customers; they are plagued also by competition from the next town, just five miles away. Indeed, while a newspaper may deem it a duty to mind the business of justice, the average merchant feels it a matter of life and death to mind his own business.

If he takes sides with justice, he knows he would offend the editor's enemies; if he withdraws even the crums of advertising, he knows he would offend the editor's friends.

So he remains mute, hoping it will all go away and let him capture as much of the town's trade as he possibly can.

A firm, decisive stand taken by him on the side of justice might have kept the agony from being prolonged; might have made the sheriff draw in his horns—but the average merchant is afraid of such a drastic step.

His mind works to the tune of the cash register, not to the beat of his heart.

I understand this—but I could never mimic it. So that is why I have two jobs.

The Great White Fleet

The works of greatness may sometimes appear from most improbable sources. The July 27th Life Magazine featured a concept which we regard as one of the greatest proposed to the American people in our lifetime.

America is losing the struggle for the hearts and minds of the awakening peoples of the world. Our sterile policies have offered money and guns to try to "contain" Communism, when what was needed was ideas.

This is a time for bold new ideas that can stir the imagination of men. Here, suddenly, is such an idea. Commander Frank Manson, U.S.N., has proposed a new "Great White Fleet." Instead of guns, they would carry food for the hungry, medical aid for the sick and injured, teachers and technicians to help underprivileged people learn to improve their own lot.

Wherever disaster, famine or disease struck throughout the world, our fleet of mercy ships would proceed full-steam, carrying drugs and doctors, surplus grain, helicopter rescue teams.

Commander Manson reports, "I have yet to find one person who is against the proposal."

The hospital and other ships required are lying at anchor "in mothballs." Concurrent resolutions have been introduced in both houses of Congress urging President Eisenhower to release the ships to such an effort. Senator Hubert Humphrey and nine other senators introduced the Senate Resolution, while forty-nine representatives signed the House Resolution.

This is not an expensive program, compared with the billions we pour into the pockets of corrupt little governments everywhere, trying vainly to buy their friendship.

Such a program may become, for courageous and adventuresome volunteers, what William James called "the moral equivalent of war."

More, it could bring to the most miserable among the world's peoples, an entirely new understanding of America.

—Maroa (Ill.) Prairie Post

The Weekly Newspaper In The Philippines

By Hugo S. Estrada

The Philippine provincial weeklies are the counterparts of the country newspapers in the United States. Unlike the metropolitan dailies that circulate in the center of communities of a good number of towns and cities, the provincial newspapers penetrate the hinterlands of the country. They reach the nipa shacks in the remote areas, and with their vernacular sections they bring to the rural folks information about their government, the incidents of everyday life, and the things that happen to them, to their friends, to their neighbors, and to their countrymen.

Notwithstanding the emergence of a vigorous and responsible rural press after World War II, there is still an alarming lack of information among the people who live in the barrios, for all the newspapers' circulation in the Philippines hardly adds up to one million copies. This is a measly score when we consider that the country's population is over 23 million.

A survey made by the National Media and Information Center and the International Cooperation Administration shows that in barrios near radio centers hardly 20 out of 600 people have access to radio sets and they average but an hour of radio listening.

It is regrettable that it looks as if the chief means of communication in the Philippines rural areas is still the kind that was used during the time of Adam and Eve. Considering the fact that about half of the 20,000 barrios (townships) are sealed off from towns and capitals for lack of roads and newspapers, it is not hard to imagine how uninformed are the majority of the rural folks.

During elections, in many instances, the electors in the rural areas vote for the wrong people, because they never knew of the issues or the kind of candidates who run for public office. Ill-health and lack of sanitation in the rural areas could have been to a great measure removed by just giving the people the information and guidance. And an enlightened citizenry, through proper stimulation and guidance, could have overcome much of the wretched poverty in the countrysides. It's hard to start a progressive, economic program without the people knowing about it and taking an active part in it.

These Philippine rural newspapers play an important role in piercing the iron curtain of information in the barrios. On this score, the provincial press occupies a position of leadership in the islands.

This might seem preposterous if we consider that Manila, the center of commercial and governmental activities in the Philippines, has six metropolitan dailies in English, one in Tagalog, and another in Spanish language. But these metropolitan dailies circulate only in towns and cities of this broken archipelago of 7,083 islands of which only 466 islands have areas over one square mile.

Aside from this peculiar geographical set-up, the Philippines is a country of rugged land with lofty mountains towering above the clouds and of rolling lands and nestling vales. The physical contour of the country has given rise to many dialects used by the inhabitants in different localities. There are, at least, 100 known dialects in the islands.

With these serving as backdrop of the role of provincial press in the Philippines, one could readily see the awesome responsibility the rural newspapers have to fulfill. They do not only have to fill a wide gap but have to bear the brunt of penetrating the rural areas.

The Philippine provincial weeklies invariably utilize their vernacular section in tearing apart the popular notion that has gained currency that national problems are solely the concern of the government and the politicians who run the government. They have made great strides in tearing down the walls that separate the people and the government.

Prior to the growth and development of vigorous and militant post war provincial newspapers, many of the inhabitants regarded the government as an island unto itself, and the politicans as a breed apart. They are supposed to administer the government, and look after the welfare of the people, and work miracles, besides. The people in the rural areas are supposed to be the passive objects—waiting to be fed, clothed, sheltered by the government.

For sure, this notion has been nurtured by an unfortunate tradition, and abetted by the lopsided set-up of our kind of government. Indeed, the centuries of Spanish regime has hardened this set-up and notion of an exclusivistic government—a government in which the people have no participation at

Hugo S. Estrada, editor of the Pangasinan Courier, of Dagupan, was honored last January by President Garcia with the designation of Philippine Provincial Editor of the Year.

all.

The principle of government-people partnership has never been a cherished philosophy in the Philippines. As in most underdeveloped countries, he who captures the national palace, captures all political power there is. Thus the set-up is a picture of an inverted pyramid—standing shakily on its apex, top-heavy with political powers and prerogatives with no visible means of support.

The efforts of the provincial press to break down the walls that separate the people and the government will soon bear fruit with the passage of the bill on local autonomy by the Philippine Congress. The measure has gone through the senate grinding machine already and is now being sent to the lower house for concurrent action.

The vigorous and militant provincial press came to being only a little more than a decade ago. It is still in the process of development but it has already made great strides in building its structure so steadily, the great odds and handicaps, notwithstanding. There are now 83 provincial weeklies that hit the streets regularly.

Pre-war rural newspapers were few and their circulation was limited. Among the pioneers in the provincial journalism in the Philippines was the **Pangasinan Review.** It was published in Dagupan City, about a hundred miles away from Manila. There were of course other pre-war provincial publications in the islands but they hit the streets off and on. It was only the **Pangasinan Review,** and three other rural periodicals in the southern islands that were known to be steady until they folded up due to World War II hostilities.

Post war provincial press in the Philippines have not only taken the lead in the presentation of problems and local achievements to the nation but have been vigilant, alert and wide-awake in molding strong public opinion. They have been the constant watchdogs of local governments. There were some temptations and pressures of all sorts from some sections that refuse to see the newspapers' role in a democracy but the Philippine provincial press has stood aloof and firm. The provincial press has always been uncompromising in the fulfillment of its mission, knowing full well that flexibility in its stand may mean either a retreat or a compromise.

A small town is where everybody knows what everybody else is doing and they all buy the weekly paper to see how much the editor dares print.

—Frederick (Colo.) Farmer & Miner

The Challenge Of The Visit

"Communism is a science," Nikita Khrushchev said Wednesday at a press conference. For that reason, he explained, he would not mind it at all if every Russian were a scientist.

We are surprised that no one has as yet, to our knowledge, seized the opportunity to offer the counter challenge: "Democracy is an art—it can only endure as such if Americans follow their freely-chosen pursuits in life, be they science, theology, music, or a multitude of other interests."

Therefore, we should make it very clear to Mr. Khrushchev, we have full confidence that our form of government—conceived by idealists, not materialists—will be striving toward its lofty objectives after Communism has been tested and discarded.

We cling to capitalism, and undoubtedly will continue to do so, because it is the only economic system we have found not in conflict with our insistence upon freedom of the individual and the least possible government interference. We cannot conceive of political freedom without economic freedom.

As for the Soviet leader's visit to the United States and other exchanges between the two nations, we are grateful that they have reminded us of the fact that we are comparing a system with unlimited potentialities to one where the goals are all prescribed and human activity restricted within their narrow confines.

We admire the Russians for their youthful vigor, which we need to regain, and pity them for an ideology which they must inevitably find inadequate and unworthy.

Their emphasis upon science and technology has produced commendable material results and undoubtedly will produce many more. Whether or not we can keep pace with them in this field is irrelevant in the comparison of the two systems of government, for man needs a great deal more than science.

We need to be reminded constantly of the great challenge of our own way of life—and the Soviet leader has served a useful purpose in that respect.

In science, too, we have a hunch that the art of Democracy—with discipline, the foundation of all successful art—will produce vastly superior results.

—Fairfield (Calif.) Solono Republican

The amount of sleep required by the average person is about five minutes more.

—Laplata (Mo.) Home Press

Does The World Have Too Much Food?

—Yorkton (Sask., Canada) Enterprise

In the September 17 issue of **The Reporter,** Karl E. Meyer's article, "Too much food in a starving world," provides a most provocative issue that is of unusual concern to Canadians, and particularly to those reading on the prairies.

Mr. Meyer provides the information that the United States government, at last count, had $8.8 billion invested in "surplus supermarket" and the annual cost of Uncle Sam for just keeping this unwanted surplus is more than $1 billion and growing with each passing year.

"The food molders; the world is hungry; the question is self-evident: Why can't the United States turn its burden into a bounty and help banish want from the world?" Mr. Meyer asks. "And even leaving moral considerations aside, the problem is especially pressing because of the changing nature of the Soviet challenge, as epitomized by Mr. Khrushchev's visit to this country."

The writer goes on to reason this burning question and predicts that while debate on this subject has been sporadic in the past the chances are excellent that the tempo of debate will quicken for three reasons which he outlines:

1.—Senator Humphrey's proposal of an ambitious Food for Peace plan aimed at turning the U. S. abundance into a more useful national asset.

2.—Realization that no providential solution can be hoped for such as a swarm of locusts to devour the huge stock.

3.—Unless America is to suffocate in a blanket of plenty, some orderly solution of disposal must be found.

The article goes on to explain how the productivity of the American farmer has been increased in leaps and bounds through science and technological advances.

In his Farm Message to Congress on January 29, President Eisenhower promised to explore the possibilities of Food for Peace. According to Meyer this almost got into the President's speech by accident but now he takes the matter seriously. A seed planted by a ghost-writer has sprouted into a major plant in full bloom.

Mr. Meyer states that Senator Humphrey and the administration are now wholly in accord in Humphrey's Food for Peace plan. After extensive hearings and co-sponsored by 15 other Democratic senators, the purpose is proclaimed in a mighty paean which serves as the preamble to the bill. And here it is:

"Because of the increased productivity made possible by science and technology, there is now, for the first time in history, no reason in physical scarcity for the continued existence of hunger, anywhere on this earth. . . . The Congress . . . declares it to be the policy of the United States to move as rapidly as possible in co-operation with other friendly nations toward putting its abundance of food and fiber more effectively in the service of human need."

Mr. Meyer states the Americans realize the danger of a stepped-up program of food sales on existing market patterns of the world. The state department centers its opposition to the plan on what it will do to other food-producing countries, such as Canada, which have food surpluses to worry about. These friends of Uncle Sam are nervous at the prospect of low-cost bargains from the U. S. supermarket.

(continued on page 29)

Our Surplus Wheat

Khrushchev rang up the curtain of his visit by firing a missile to the moon, gets annoyed by hecklers and the lack of enthusiasm of curious but unenthusiastic Americans, then tries to pull a rabbit out of the hat with his disarmament proposal. All agree it is a political, not a practical proposal. If all Americans, regardless of political affiliation, would truly demonstrate their basic respect for the dignity of every individual in the world and help others to help themselves, minus an unintentional air of superiority and charity, that would be the greatest disarmament proposal.

We have the machinery; we can iron out the rough spots, and we can convert a current food surplus headache, now costing more than a billion a year for storage, to help others and ourselves. Khrushchev's fear of America is because of our ability to produce. What we need to do is not curtail that ability to produce which gives Khrushchev and Russians an inferiority complex, but convert our ideas and surpluses to understandable weapons for peace which we give generously by living up to our guideposts and giving ungrudgingly. When we do that, we can use our 60-billion loaves of bread, our technical know-how and with our friends of the free world travel down freedom's road—even converting the Russians.

—Livingston (Mont.) Park County News

. . . Let's Work For A Humane Answer!

—Huntington (N. Y.) Long-Islander

What would Mr. Khrushchev do if he had sixty billion loaves of bread to give away? It's an interesting question, but not as interesting as the fact that we have sixty billion loaves we don't know what to do with.

Karl Meyer, who poses the question of Khrushchev and the loaves in a recent article in the Reporter, also went into some detail about our surplus food disposal program.

To the few who are aware of it, this program goes under the name of Public Law 480. It enables us to donate food to famine areas, to sell food for the "soft" currencies of underdeveloped countries, which payment is then reinvested in development projects in those countries, and to barter surplus foods for raw materials that we need. Public Law 480 has enabled us to undertake more than seven and a half billion dollars worth of projects ranging all the way from hydroelectric plants to exchange students and trade fair exhibits.

It's a record to be proud of, but no one is because no one knows about it. Neither the people who ultimately eat some of our surplus food, or ourselves, who pay double taxes for it, know what goes on. Whatever else Comrade K might do with 60 billion loaves, he would leave no one in the dark about it.

The people who ate Comrade K's bread would be informed they were eating the magnificent, munificent results of a magnificent system—Communism—the only system that could hope to save the world. They would be told, as they assuaged their hunger, that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. As they patted their satisfied stomachs, there would not be a single incipient democratic capitalist among them. They would be the satisfied converts of Comrade K and Communism.

The Problem Of The Loaf

The matter of taking a bushel of wheat from a government granary and turning it into bread to be used somewhere else is a complex process. Problems of world trade, transportation, currency, contracts and political considerations all intrude. Nevertheless, it is a fact that we are morally and economically burdened with a vast surplus that could be used to win friends and influence people who are the special targets of the Kremlin.

—Sayville (N. Y.) Suffolk County News

As they eat our bread, what do they think? If it was given them, they don't even know that it came from us. If they paid for it, they don't know what happens to the painfully made payment. If they bartered for it, they don't know why the raw materials go out and no money comes in.

The people who eat our 60 billion loaves know only that we have huge food surpluses that we dig under and throw away while they starve. They decide that capitalism is all the horrible things the Communists say it is. And they decide that democracy is not worth the price of an empty stomach. Our bread feeds millions of incipient Communists. Even the Bible does not recommend hiding one's light under a bushel. To hide it under a full bushel is even worse.

Are we studying to become experts in how to lose cold wars and to end up outdistanced in peaceful co-existence? It would seem that way.

Public Law 480 has no administrative head. Nine agencies are involved in its administration and a whole population could die of starvation before these mountains of bureaucracy had even started loading the first loaf. Public Law 480 is on a purely temporary basis, in spite of the fact that our farmers have been producing huge surpluses for well over a decade, and will continue to do so for as long as there are farmers.

There is a movement afoot now to change the name of the law from Public Law 480 to Food for Peace. There is also a bill being readied by Senator Humphrey, who was well exposed to the implacable brilliance of Comrade K, to put the law on a permanent basis, increase the scope of what it can do, and straighten out and ease its administration by creating an administrative head for it—the Peace Food Administrator.

Such changes are good, and should have our active and enthusiastic support. A positive approach to our huge surpluses and some positive publicity about what we do with them could do much to help us win the cold war. And having seen and heard Mr. Khrushchev for ourselves, we should be aware that we have no time to muddle around and make mistakes, or Communism will "bury capitalism," just like the man says.

As things stand now, our surpluses have caused more headaches than they have made friends for our way of life. Comrade Khrushchev really doesn't need 60 billion loaves of bread to give away—he has ours to work for him instead.

Is Change Always Progress?

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO SHIPS? How well we remember struggling up a ladder with a quarter of beef on our shoulder. Or whole days spent chipping the many layers of paint off a stanchion; or tightening the canvas cover over a hatch to keep stores dry in the hold.

Now the ads show streamlined ships, where the ladders have become stairways (with risers, even!); the stanchions have disappeared underneath the round bulging streamline of modern superstructure, and the hatches are camouflaged into the deck.

It's always fun to remember how things used to be, but it doesn't really mean anything. Or does it?

How many readers can remember when autos had a wheel at each corner, and every time a wheel hit a rock the riders got a sharp jolt?

Now the cars have all four wheels in the middle, and instead of a jolt, we just teeter and pitch up and down for half a block after running over a rock. Is this better? We don't know.

Is change always "progress," and is progress always good? Well, it's nearly always been considered that way since the 30's when we started to pick ourselves up after the disillusionment which followed the crash.

It was the age-old custom of the Chinese to revere the old folks whose nostalgic memories often played an important part in their decisions. Maybe that's what held China back all these centuries while other nations had progress.

But now the old Chinese patriarchs have been hauled off to do menial chores on the farms, and China is achieving "progress" in great strides under Mao tse Tung. Is this good?

A close look might reveal that, along with nostalgic memories, there's usually the comforting thought that in "the good old days" common sense and integrity kept up with progress. Right now they are far behind. How many drivers do you know who NEVER drive recklessly? And how many people do you know who don't go into debt if they can possibly avoid it?

Is change always progress? Only after these values have had a chance to catch up with the changes. —Windsor (Colo.) Beacon

What Is Progress?

It was a purely informal discussion. The only specialist in the group was a sociologist. He was holding forth on the problems of the aging.

Somebody wanted to know did he think compulsory retirement at 65 was a good or a bad thing.

"Well," he parried the question, "you can't turn the clock back?"

"Why can't you?" someone else demanded, belligerently.

"In every area of life," the questioner continued, "we Americans have come to assume 'you can't turn the clock back.' What I mean is, we have come to take it for granted that trends, no matter how bad they may be, are inevitable and irreversible.

"Take our agriculture specialists. They freely admit it is unfortunate, really a calamity, that farming as a way of life is being replaced by corporation-type agriculture. But they throw up their hands, helplessly. They say 'it's the trend; there's nothing you can do about it—except adjust to it.'

"Then there's an awful lot of evidence that the radiation that goes along with release of atomic energy—whether it's for wartime or peacetime uses —is endangering us all and especially the generations yet to be born. But it never seems to occur to anybody we might stop releasing it. 'It's the trend,' we are told; 'there's nothing you can do about it—except adjust to it.' And most of us accept that as gospel.

"And many people think this business of making everybody retire at 65—whether they want to or not, whether they are worn out or not—is bad business. But the only answer you, a specialist, can give us is: "It's the trend; there's nothing you can do about it—except adjust to it."

"So," he continued, "what do we do?"

"What we do is assume there's nothing we can do about the situations that really are the cause of our troubles, and so we scatter our energies more and more trying to solve the growing number of problems that really are results . . . like a doctor treating the symptoms instead of the disease.

"What I want to know is: What's happened to change the American character? We haven't always been defeatists and fatalists.

"There was a time when Americans took it for

granted they could change conditions, instead of being changed by them. And it wasn't an attitude of 'maybe we can do something about this'; it was an attitude of we're going to do something about this."

"What's happened to change us?" and the belligerent one looked about at the group.

"I can tell you!" shot back the sociologist, ignoring the fact his answer was an indictment of what he himself had said earlier.

"I can tell you. We've changed because we've all become victims of the Cult of Progress."

Then he asked his own question:

"What is progress?"

There was silence. But he persisted:

"Surely one of you can define progress."

Again there was a long silence.

Nobody in the group had a serious answer; so at last someone came up with a facetious one:

"It's hurrying to the grave."

—Franklin (N. C.) Press

The Magic Of Progress

Progress is the magic word.

Progress is the spirit and image of our age. "This is progress . . . that is progress . . . yes, sir, we're making wonderful progress . . . you can't beat progress."

The word is on everyone's lips. Yet no one knows what it means or where it may lead.

Ask any man on the street what progress is and, nine times out of nine, he will tell you: "Why, man, progress is the stuff this country is made of. Without progress we wouldn't be nowhere at all."

We have tried to find the meaning of this miracle word; and we've gotten nowhere. Progress may mean the continuing urge toward bigger and faster cars, larger and swifter planes, taller and more imposing buildings. Certainly it shows its face in these forms. Speed and size are quantities that can be seized upon and measured, yet they in themselves give no real meaning to the word nor do they give it direction toward any tangible goal.

Progress is a relatively new concept. For centuries man lived happily in blissful ignorance of progress. He lived well and, we understand, enjoyed the fruits of his casual existence. Then suddenly a little over a century ago, a philosopher whose name I can not recall upset the applecart of tranquillity by selling Western man, cold turkey, on the notion that mankind needed motion. "Pay less thought to your heaven and hell," he said, "and give some thought to the fuller enjoyment of your life on earth."

The seeds of progress were sown. The seeds took root and progress was the crop.

The notion of improving our lot on earth appealed to the men of that time. Vast areas of the earth beckoned for exploration. Adventure called, and exploitation followed. Progress was in the saddle dragging mankind behind it at an ever increasing clip.

Progress alone was enough. Where it might lead didn't matter, so long as there was motion, activity and change.

Today progress is king. We hear its raucous voice at every hour. The racketing power-mower jars our souls from rest in the bird-call blush of the morning; rumbling tractor-trailers shake our homes by day and night; and the white-plumed serpents of the air unfurl their ceaseless thunder from the skies. Progress.

The greater the progress, the greater the speed, the madder the racket.

On August 26, 1959, progress achieved a new distinction, with the announcement in Russian newspapers that "a lifeless Russian is now circling in outer space," at random, in the most progressive race of all, toward nothing, and forever.

Give the progress button another tweak and we may very well unleash the lightning flash that will shatter the earth itself, and leave not a wrack behind.

—Madison (N. C.) Messenger

It's A Fight Nowadays

While dining at a local pub the other night a lovely local woman came over to our table and told us that Editor Branen was hated by many for his editorials, but she, bless her, loved him and he should continue his fight. . . . Is telling the truth a fight nowadays? Can't men speak from the shoulder without fear of being hated, banned, or banished? Freedom of man's thoughts is America's only asset to fame, and I certainly wouldn't let a few people change my ideas on that.

—Burlington (Wis.) Standard-Press

They're Still Arguing About Schools

WITH THE RESUMPTION of school, the argument between "progressive" education and the old-style "Three R's" has come to the front again. . . with some indications that the discussions have brought about a few changes in terminology, if nothing more.

It is now evident that this is a struggle between a minority of "educationists" and a minority of reactionaries—the great multitude of people, both in and out of education, have not been aroused either way.

A few years ago the reactionaries, including this writer, were hot against "snap courses." The terminology has changed now, at least. There are no longer any snap courses—even the most frilly ones have now brought in the use of highly specialized vocabularies and terminology that make these courses nearly as difficult as the others, even though the amout of USEFUL information put out by the courses remains the same as before.

So now the division is "generating" courses and "self-terminating" ones. The first are all which serve to give the student interest and ability to continue his questioning and education after graduation—things like reading and math and science. The "self-terminating" courses are the ones like driver education, fly-casting or diaper-folding—those where, once you've learned the skill, that's just about all there is to it.

There are schools in the cities that turn out nearly 100 per cent machinists and beauticians. Clifton Fadiman, author of a recent book on the subject of schools, says such pupils get their jobs okay, and do just fine until they reach about 40 years of age, by which time a man has usually mastered his work and is ripe to begin questioning bigger problems, like religion or politics or economics. When the "progressive" student reaches this age, he finds he is lost—he's never been given the tools for further research on his own. And, concludes Fadiman, if enough people become "lost" in this manner, our nation itself will also be lost.

* * *

TIME MAGAZINE, too, centered its sights on education this week, describing the efforts of James Conant in analyzing our nation's high schools, and giving a brief history of the running argument between college professors and teachers' colleges. However, says Time, the professors "have found that only 24 per cent of elementary teachers and 17 per cent of high school teachers come from the despised (and fast disappearing) teachers' colleges, and the remainder come from the professors' own liberal arts colleges."

The professors' argument was that the teachers' colleges give a minimum of subject information and a maximum of useless (and sometimes harmful) teaching methods.

To the majority of Beacon readers who probably have pooh-poohed the argument about teaching methods, here is a simple test:

If you have a child or grandchild or nephew or niece now in the grades, have him add a column of eight or ten figures, and watch closely how he goes about it. You may be amazed.

—Windsor (Colo.) Beacon

What Are They Learning?

We have learned that more than a few Denver parents are unwilling to accept the smug appraisal of the school program that Kenneth E. Oberholtzer, superintendent of Denver public schools, seems bent on foisting on the public.

Oberholtzer makes much of a public opinion poll in which this finding is included:

"No particular area of instruction is being neglected or overemphasized. A proper balance is being maintained in the program of subjects presently being taught in the Denver Public Schools."

Our informants among deeply concerned parents tell us this simply isn't true, that many parents feel the high school program is woefully inadequate and that Denver high school graduates are ill-equipped for studies at higher education institutions.

Specifically, Denver high schools aren't requiring enough of students in mathematics, physics, chemistry and other science subjects. That's what some parents say.

Meanwhile, we learn that a series in the Denver Post concerning Colorado State University student shortcomings in simple English and grammar is dropped because the series reflects unfavorably on the Denver school system.

Denver taxpayers are entitled to know what the Denver schools are doing to keep pace with the much advertised education program of the Russians.

We learn that in England a 15-year-old schoolboy has already been subjected to more training in basic science courses than are required of an 18-year-old in the Denver high school system.

—Cervi's Rocky Mountain Journal, Denver (Colo.)

Life At Forty

A dues-paying member of the Main Street Bird Watchers let out a long, low whistle the other evening when a well-equipped young thing walked by. It was the same, full-throated joyous sound that has paid tribute to female charms in all languages and climates since Eve threw a curve at Adam.

It is interesting that while the whistle is the same, references to the subject's availability, stability and ability change with each generation. A girl with a well-trained wiggle wrapped in a hip-tight skirt is described in several pet phrases by the modern Bird Watchers but we have been unable to learn what they are. They do not confide in us.

Thirty years ago this girl's mother might have been referred to as a quiff. This was a girl with whom you most certainly would if you could, but who could afford it? She smoked and was fast and out of your league, but you would look and yearn. A young quiff, or a would-be-quiff, was called jail bait. Far above both categories was the girl with an untrained wiggle, in a modest skirt, the type you would marry, and was real nice, but dull.

Most of the Main Street Bird Watchers with whom we were permitted to associate in those dear dead days beyond recall were young men of considerable imagination and potential talent in the arts of romance, but it seldom, if ever got beyond the conversation stage. Many a quiff looked back after a long low whistle only to find a dud, and many a nice girl kept eyes straight ahead, ignored the low brutes, and eventually nailed one of them to the alter. We guess it's the same today.

—Sayville (N. Y.) Suffolk County News

Only One Missouri

We are chided by a good friend for supporting the idea of a one-house legislature because it would place representation on a population basis, which he contends would be bad. Things favorable to rural Missouri—such as King road aid—would not, he believes, be legislated in such a body.

But we cannot see any real justice or democracy in having acres represented in the Missouri legislature. On the whole, we find Missouri city residents and Missouri rural residents are good people, not really bent on fighting each other, but easily led to support things that are good for the whole state.

And it seems to us the failures of the two-house General Assembly in protecting rural interests—notably the notorious prevailing wage law, through two sessions—are even more impressive than its achievements.

A unicameral legislature is not a cure-all, and nobody contends that it is. But twenty years of experience with it in Nebraska has failed to produce any of the horrors for which traditionalist Missourians sound the alarm, and it does provide a common-sense approach to straightforward legislative labors, economy and an informed public.

—Pleasant Hill (Mo.) Times

Does The World . . .

(continued from page 24)

Mr. Humphrey contends that providing additional food supplies to those in need is not "dumping" and will not markedly displace purchases from other food-producing countries. Readers of the **Enterprise** will recall that this is what former President Truman told the editor of the **Enterprise** when they discussed this question last July.

In concluding his article Mr. Meyer states:

The difficulties and limitations of the program are obvious, and they have been stressed enough by those who regard our unwanted food as a mixed blessing. What hasn't been given equal stress is the enormous potential for human good that lies locked in our storage bins. Isn't it worth wondering what Mr. Khrushchev might do if he had 60 billion loaves to give away?

Of one thing we can be certain: something will have to be done about the huge food surplus that has developed on this continent and it is well that there is a liaison working between Canada and the United States. It could be that the Canadian government will join with the Americans in providing wheat to nations populated by many people who are starving. To do this will mean the loss of huge sums already invested by both countries but it may prove best in the end.

We have been watching closely for the Canadian government to announce a two-price system for Canadian wheat. Possibly this announcement will have to await the next session of parliament which seems likely in November. But the government will have good reason to raise the price of wheat to the Canadian consumer to a point of parity with other items that all Canadians must buy. It may contribute a little bit more to inflation but what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

The good old days were rare in the good old days.

—Granite City (Ill.) Press Record

Will Labor Unions Take Over The South?

There are sharply divided opinions on whether labor unions will eventually take over the industrial South.

To date the inroads of labor organization have been sporadic and not too successful in most parts of the South, but the fight continues.

At the International Newspaper Conference in Illinois last month, John McDermott, a professor at Southern Illinois University, said, unequivocally: "Inevitably labor will eventually win the South. It is a tide than cannot be stopped."

Mr. McDermott is himself a former labor leader; and, too, a former management man. At present he is teaching graduate courses in Labor and Management at SIU, a relatively new field study.

"The boys I'm training now," Mr. McDermott said, "will have some background to step into responsible jobs on both sides of the fence when they receive their degrees. They will be equipped equally to go into Labor leadership or Industrial management."

Mr. McDermott declared: "The labor unions are here to stay. Right now their administrators are untrained. The unions haven't kept up with management in hiring educated or trained personnel. But they will do it. The conquest of the South by the unions is only a matter of time."

In contrast to this opinion, is the voice of Harry Golden, North Carolina Editor, who says: "The unions may never win over the South. Since 1950, in the TWUA alone, membership in the South has steadily declined, in spite of the fact that the TWUA is spending over one million dollars per year to unionize the Southern Textile Industry."

According to Mr. Golden, the management got smart, early in the fight, and hired trained personnel to handle their labor problems. The unions didn't catch on and are losing out because they are still fighting the old "class war" which no longer exists.

Mr. Golden expressed the belief that the recent Congressional hearings in Washington on the activities of Teamsters Union—which has no relationship whatsoever to the TWUA—has inadvertently done the TWUA more harm than an atom blast. The revelations brought out in the hearings have turned southerners and people everywhere against unions, all unions, regardless of the manner in which they operate. The result is that the public is behind the employer, the employer is sitting at the cat bird seat.

The reason the TWUA goes on spending vas amounts of money in the South, Mr. Golden says is that they're in a fix where they can't quit. The unions already have the Northern textile mills tied up. These mills, in turn are looking to the unions to tie up their competitors in the South. If they quit trying to organize the South, they will lose what they already have tied up in the North. For, once the South is free from union activity, the remaining textile factories in the North will come south so fast it will make your head spin.

"Union personnel," according to Mr. Golden, "still live in the days when the worker puts in 11 hours per day at 35c per hour. Those days are gone. The worker now has a nice home, a fine car, a TV, and all the good things of life. Management has kept ahead of the unions. The Southern employer has changed his philosophy swiftly and with great intelligence. The union has been slow to recognize this and, as a consequence, has little to offer the Southern worker. With all their great resources, and with all their history, they have not kept up with the times and this is their great problem. It can easily be their downfall."

—Madison (N. C.) Messenger

The More You Spill!

There is a special place in the merchandising paradise reserved for the fellow who designs dry cereal packages. Anybody who can create a demand for 30 per cent more of the product than the customer uses qualifies as a genius in the same category as the stylist who persuaded today's teen-agers they needed crinolines which went out of style in 1890.

The cereal box, with its sanitary waxed paper inner packages, is ingeniously planned to reach out and flip half of the Toasty Crunchies on the table or the floor. It just naturally makes you buy more boxes. The more you spill the more you buy.

Today's packagers are so smart that I believe they keep on using the spill-sure pack on purpose. They could surely design an easy-pour spout. But they would be foolish to put an end to a good thing.

—Collinsville (Ill.) Herald

Grover Cleveland fished, Cal Coolidge held a fish-line, Herbert Hoover fished and played golf, Franklin Roosevelt swam and sailed, Harry Truman walked, and Dwight Eisenhower plays golf. What this country needs is a good horseshoe pitcher.

—Carlinville (Ill.) Enquirer

Books for Editors

It is no accident that the real heroes of the American press are a young boy who defied his elder brother as well as most of the big wigs in town; a poor German printer freezing his feet in jail while his lawyers enjoyed their debates in the warmth of a nearby tavern; a country preacher shot down in the act of defending his press from a mob, and a cornbread sort of guy like Ernie Pyle. The fat cats of journalism just can't be bothered to risk their skins. They leave such things to the working press and the country editors.

Martyrdom always has had a way of seeking out little people, the lean, the hungry, the frustrated, individuals rescued from obscurity by devotion to principle when principle seemed to be just about all they could claim as their own. Martyrdom never shows a profit. In fact it is not even respectable, except in retrospect.

Upon his death the name of Elijah Lovejoy became both shibboleth and anathema. There was little of the definitive in the florid memorials of his family, his friends, or in the writings of those who used his name to feed the fires of abolitionism. Certainly there was little of the truth about the man in the legends circulated in Alton, Ill., the village of his death where, for 27 years, the grave of Lovejoy was denied the dignity of a marker.

At last, after nearly a century and a quarter John Gill, another young minister, seeks to set the record straight in **Tide Without Turning: Elijah P. Lovejoy and Freedom of the Press**, (Star King Press, Boston, $4.50). From a scholarly examination of the standard sources, plus much unpublished material, there has emerged a readable biography which shows Lovejoy as destined by native intelligence, family influence and education to find his way into the eye of a storm.

Perhaps because he too had trod the streets of the little town on the banks of the Mississippi River, Mr. Gill was able to extract from his preliminary readings and to restate in his manuscript most revealingly the social and cultural environment through which Lovejoy struggled in search of his conscience.

A man of considerable learning for his age, Lovejoy was a leader in his church with values conventional enough to have kept him comfortably placed in his profession had he elected to remain in New England. Even in St. Louis and Alton he won the support of influential people who might have been able to help him avoid his tragedy had he been willing to confine his efforts to the pulpit. It was when he found that neither the mob, nor people of position were willing to respect his right to explore in print the unpopular as well as the popular side of a controversy that Lovejoy came to grips with the issue that was to hasten the end of his life.

Accused of smuggling out of St. Louis copies of the hated Emancipator, disguised as a consignment of Bibles, Lovejoy published in the St. Louis Observer his denial of the charge along with a statement in his belief in the principles of law and order and his determination to defend his Consitutional rights at all cost:

And now, fellow-citizens, having made the above explanation for the purpose of undeceiving such of you as have honestly supposed me in error; truth and candor require me to add that had I desired to send a copy of the Emancipator or of any other newspaper to Jefferson City, I should not have taken the pains to box it up.

I am not aware that any law of my country forbids my sending what document I please to a friend or citizen. I know, indeed, that MOB LAW has decided otherwise, and that it has become fashionable in certain parts of this country to break open the Post Office, and take from it such documents as the mob should decide ought not to pass unburned. But I had never imagined that there was a sufficiency of respectability attached to the proceeding to recommend it for adoption to the good citizens of my own State. And grievously and sadly shall I be disappointed to find it otherwise. . . . The truth is, my fellow citizens, if you give ground, a single inch, there is no stopping place.

.I deem it, therefore, my duty to take my stand upon the Constitution. Here is firm ground—I feel it to be such. And I do most respectfully yet decidedly declare to you my fixed determination to maintain this ground. We have slaves, it is true, but I am not one. I am a citizen of Missouri, free-born; and having never forfeited the inestimable privileges attached to such a condition, I cannot consent to surrender them. . . .

Lovejoy had taken his stand. Subsequent events were simply details of the inevitable, avoidable only by fleeing the field. Lovejoy later became an abolitionist. However, he died not in defense of this cause, but fighting for his right to own a newspaper press and to print what he saw fit.

Sigma Delta Chi, the journalistic fraternity, is perhaps the greatest Greek letter professional organization in the United States. It seems appropriate, therefore, that Charles C. Clayton, old pro personified, should be called upon to prepare the golden anniversary history which has been issued under the title of **Fifty Years for Freedom: the Story of Sigma Delta Chi's Service to American Journalism, 1909-1959**, (Southern Illinois University Press, $4.50).

Many of the great names of American journalism are here, and some not so great. They rate their places in the spotlight of fraternity history, not for the big jobs they have held, or the money they have made, or the great men they have interviewed. Recognition is strictly in proportion to the role in the life of the fraternity. Clayton has sifted out most effectively the phonies, and the front runners. In systematic fashion he brings the record up to date, refreshingly purged of tap room anecdotes and half remembered campus trivia. Readable today, this book is a valuable reference for many years to come.

Americans have succeeded in building up the most successful civilization on record, concedes Joseph Wood Krutch in **Human Nature and the Human Condition** (Random House, $3.95), but the price is too high and built-in weaknesses are undermining the pink and white world we have created for ourselves. As slaves of our machines we are important as mere consumers of goods in support of rising production goals. Advertising persuades us to buy more and more of the things we do not need and do not even want. In our eagerness to partake of consumer delights we are suppressing our own individual differences and thereby inviting new pressures for conformity.

For an antidote, or at least for a more optimistic point of view there is **R. L. Bruckberger's Image of America** (Viking Press, $4.50). As Granville Hicks points out in Saturday Review, "Father Bruckberger is not a materialist, not a moral relativist, but he believes that American society has been and still is a hopeful portent. . . . . He thinks that our experimentalism, our freedom from dogmatic commitments, which has served us so well in the past, may save us and the world." H. R. L.

REPORT from ENGLAND

by

Mrs. Gordon Clemetson

Tales of the trials and tribulations which provincial newspaper offices faced during the seven weeks of the printing dispute provided the main topic of conversation among Editors at the Journalists' Get-Together Weekend organised by the Guild of British Newspapers Editors, and held this year at Wadham College, Oxford. These and the weather! —for Britian was still scorching in a heat wave which seemed to have lasted all the summer and which even in mid-September was still at its height. In the cloistered atmosphere of this ancient College (founded in 1610 as the last of the early private foundations in Oxford, and boasting among its numerous famous "sons" that "prodigious young scholar Mr. Christopher Wren") some hundred journalists of all ranks gathered to enjoy a full programme of lectures and discussions on various aspects of newspaper journalism.

This is a conference designed to be of particular benefit to young journalists during their period of training. Throughout the weekend there is no distinction of any kind between juniors and seniors: all mix freely together, sitting informally on wooden benches round the meal tables in the Great Hall of the College and meeting in the Common Room between lectures when the small talk—as is invariably the way with journalists—is always on journalism!

It is the informal atmosphere more than anything else which makes these annual conferences so popular and so beneficial to old and young alike. Juniors gain much from the many discussions they have with their seniors. There is no doubt also that, from the point of view of the seniors, the weekend affords a golden opportunity to get much closer to the problems of the juniors.

Dr. H. C. Strick, the Director of the National Training Scheme for Journalists, is always in attendance at these conferences. This year he did not give his usual talk, but he was readily available to answer personal questions on training.

The guest at the opening dinner was Mr. Geoffrey Cox, Editor of Independent Television News, who spoke on "The role of the newspaper in the television age." Though his talk turned out to be in essence "The role of television" rather than that of newspapers, it was none the less provocative. The President of the Guild, Mr. E. T. Symons, (Editor of the Portsmouth Evening News) was in the chair.

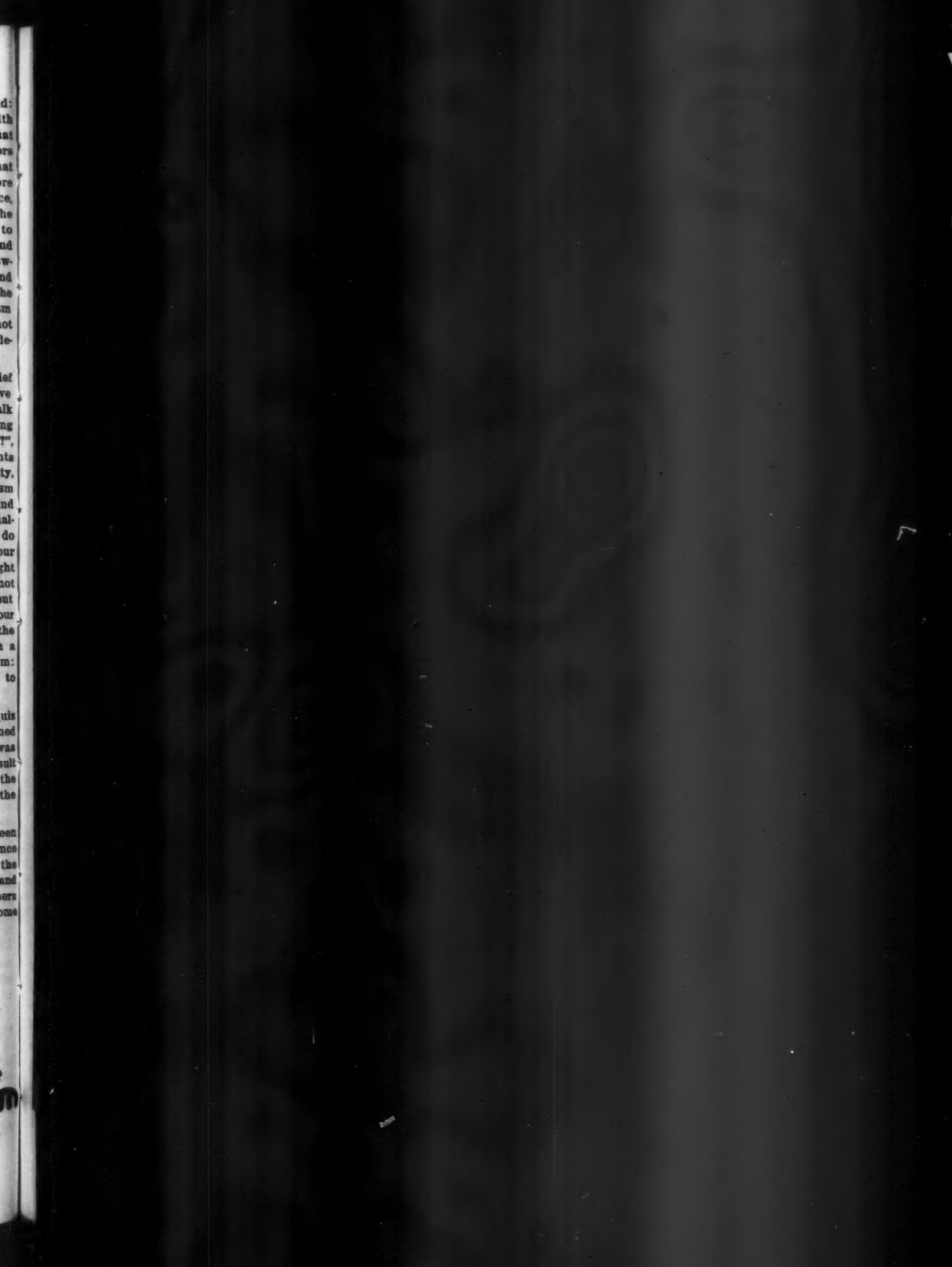
Sharp at 9:30 on Saturday morning the conference assembled to hear a brilliant address by Member of Parliament, Mr. William Deedes, better known in newspaper circles as a journalist contributing to the popular Peterborough column of the Daily Telegraph. His subject was "Newspapers and the Public," and he strongly contended that the contents of a country's press was a fair reflection of its society. "A healthy society will command healthy news," he said, "but the danger today is that of the 'rock 'n' roll King' jostling with the Minister of State, while the shapely young woman too often eclipses international news." Mr. Deedes went on to deplore the public relations technique which started with the war. Today every institution boasts a Press Relations Officer and the trend is disquieting. "When newspapermen cease to check news they are ready to accept anything. The growing stature of the P. R. O. is not, in my view, a healthy sign," he concluded.

Mr. L. C. J. McNae's talk on "Crime and the Journalist" was good, down-to-earth guidance on crime reporting, of particular value to the young people. Author of "Essential Law for Journalists" (a valuable reference book on English legal pit-falls), Mr. McNae answered many questions put to him at the close of his lecture. He was followed after lunch by Mr. H. W. Ingleton, whose long experience as a working Editor, latterly of the Bournemouth Times, enabled him to give many practical tips on how to look for those "off the diary" stories which demand imagination, resourcefulness and enterprise.

There is no doubt that Saturday evening's session when "Any Questions" were directed at Mr. Arthur Christiansen, the famous Editorial Director of the Daily Express, was the high-light of the weekend. Mr. Christiansen's delightful personality reflects his utter sincerity. He is at his best when he is answering questions spontaneously and without preparation. This report could well have been filled with the many pertinent and discerning things he had to say which gave his hearers a wider view of the vast field of opportunity and responsibility which the press affords to those who seek it as a career. Referring to his own remarkable proprietor, Lord Beaverbrook, as a "very fine working journalist," Mr. Christiansen said: "It is hell and heaven to work with Beaverbrook." He thought, however, that the age of great newspaper proprietors was over. In the future he foresaw that newspapers would be run more and more to make money rather than to influence, though he was still confident that the only way to become an Editor was to become a good journalist. "Big type and typography," said Mr. Christiansen, answering another question, "is a snare and a delusion. If the staff have not got the training to produce good journalism then all the type in the world will not help them. Everything in journalism depends on readability."

It was Mr. C. Jervis, Editor-in-chief of the Press Association, who gave what was probably the most valuable talk from the point of view of the training journalist. Calling it "Fact or Fiction?", he dealt admirably with the requirements for good journalism: Responsibility, equipment, shorthand, ethics, criticism and facts. "If you have a gun, you find where your saftey catch is. In journalism you have infinitely more power to do harm than with a gun. So find out your facts," said Mr. Jervis in his forthright fashion. Of ethics he decared: "It is not a special code that is required, but the ordinary, decent code of behaviour in society," and he made a plea for the right people to enter journalism with a proper sense of dignity. Of criticism: "The first function of criticism is to praise."

The weekend closed with a final quiz session when four Editors questioned four juniors, while the audience was allowed to enter the ring. The result was a stimulating finale to one of the best gatherings of its kind that the Guild has ever sponsored.

Next year's dates have already been fixed—the 1960 Get-Together will once again be at Wadham College on the weekend of September 16 to 18, and it is emphasized that the organisers will be particularly happy to welcome anyone from overseas.

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